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# The SMART SET

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Young Man"**

*by Zoe Akins*

**"The Amateur Daniel"**

*by Frank R. Adams*

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# THE SMART SET

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AND

A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

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# THE SMART SET

*The Magazine for the Civilized Minority*

## ARCADY

By Muna Lee

IT was such April weather  
As a lover never forgets,  
When I and my love roamed together  
Looking for violets.

The breeze laughed straight in our faces,  
And joy laughed straight from our hearts,  
While grasses lisped in the marshy places  
Where the johnny-jump-up starts.

Little creek sang, young leaves stirred,  
And we heard the blue-birds call;  
But my lover's low, half-whispered word  
Was sweetest sound of all.

Then—the hills were purple-clad,  
And the banks of the stream were sweet,  
For a million slender violets had  
Sprung up beneath our feet.

And the violets were joy in plenty,  
With the dark, cool leaves between,  
To my love, who was not twenty,  
And me, who was just seventeen.



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## JUDGMENT

By William Sanford

TWO men loved a woman, one was wise—the other a fool.

The wise man talked to the woman of his travels. He told her of hair-breadth escapes from Africa to the frozen north. He spoke of books as one who knows them, and named famous men in all walks of life as his friends. He dwelt on topics of the present day, political, educational, scientific—his knowledge seemed endless.

The fool held the woman's hand and told her it was the dearest little hand in the world, and he looked into the woman's eyes, and told her they were the sweetest eyes on earth.

And one day, soon after they were married, the wise man chanced to pass them on the street. The woman saw him and laughed.

"You ought to hear that man talk!" she said. "He's a perfect fool!"



## SPRING IN TOWN

By Thyra Samter Winslow

I KNOW that Spring is here.

The strips of earth between the streets and the sidewalks are hard, grey,  
Littered with bits of dirtied paper.

The wind is cutting, dusty, unfriendly.

But I know that Spring is here.

I do not know how I know it.

Perhaps by the new pink muslin rose on a factory girl's shabby hat,

Perhaps by the Greek boy's far-away smile as he shines my shoes,

Perhaps by the recurrent echoes of pale green country Springs.

I do not know.

I only know that I am whistling to myself little hopeful, tuneless things,

Because Spring is here.



# THE DISTURBING ELEMENT

By Aura Brantzell

## I

THERE is an old Hindoo proverb which goes something like this: "Be wary of a talkative woman when she is silent—perhaps she is thinking." The truth of this Parsons learned from Mitzi.

All the wily subtlety of the Slav and the volatility and loquacity of the Latin combine naturally in Mitzi Janos. She is from the country called foundling in Europe—neither of the Orient or Occident, neither Turk, Tartar or Teuton, Southern or Saxon—and of the race without a country.

Mitzi paints. Against the red walls of her studio, like tiny flowers uptossed on seas of blood, are innumerable charming ivories—men, women, children and dogs. Whatever you are, if you want a really clever miniature of yourself, find Mitzi Janos in Washington Square South.

Mitzi would repudiate with scorn any implication of ancestral connection with the countryless; yet it is written in the lines of both her face and figure: the former, dark and round in outline, its expression of stolidity—hardness, even—retrieved by wonderful dark eyes beneath which a psychoanalyst would sense sentimentality: the latter thick above the waist, tapering to small feet which toe-out as queerly on New York pavements as do those of her relatives still walking the fields of Hungary. It is further written in the felicities of a satisfying bank account, a couple of pieces of valuable suburban real estate and a fine little income manipulated somewhere in Wall Street.

This last was the first reason for

Parsons. When Parsons came to New York from out the Middle West, with about \$200,000 in cash and enough more to purchase a seat on the Exchange, he was Daniel W. Parsons. Before Time had crossed from its calendar three hundred and sixty-five days, he became Daniel Webster Parsons. When seven hundred and thirty days had become chronology, prosperity and social surroundings had evolved him into a successful personage who signed his checks D. Webster Parsons, and his wife had acquired social aspirations bounded on the North by the young Nineties, the West by the Hudson, the South by the late Fifties and on the East by the right side of Fifth Avenue. In this sacred sanctuary of fortune's favored few, Parsons, Mrs. D. Webster Parsons and a hairy-faced dog of ancient antecedents have been familiar figures for several years.

Mrs. Parsons knows many things about Parsons—and thinks she knows them all. However, wives and omniscience never have been synonymous. For a long while she did not know about Mitzi.

When Mitzi came into Parsons' life she came like the Greeks, bearing gifts. Literally, it was money for him to invest in Wall Street when stocks were low; figuratively, she bore in her hands a dispensation of the gods from the dragging tedium of social slavery. Parsons invested her money and, be it recorded to his credit, as well for her as for himself.

He admired the fiery little Hungarian. She amused him; she entertained him. Her funny little mistakes in English and her attempts at New York

vernacular, made in the high-pitched tones of her race, always "got over" with him and gave him a laugh in which she joined, though loudly and at inopportune times—such as in a crowd—yet in a manner unrestrainedly companionable.

And then—maybe he made love to her. Parsons was the type of masculinity that considers it rude not to make love to a woman—the sort that never disappoints by not kissing when, according to the situation, it is perfectly natural to do so, even if it is necessary to create the situation.

From his viewpoint, his affair with Mitzi was quite a harmless one. She adored him openly and exhibited him in her train with pride after the manner of her type. And she did not know that he was married until quite a long time after he had been visiting Washington Square, had taken her to dinner many times, and had attended her studio teas and made himself generally solid with her and the habitants of the quarter.

Even then Parsons did not tell her. She found it out herself. How? That does not matter to us; what does matter is that she never intimated that she knew!

However, anyone who knows him will tell you that Parsons is clever. In Mitzi's case he was clever enough to combine flirtation and business so smoothly that they blended into a Platonic friendship—1915 model. And it was solely friendship. Having no hankering for international complications, Parsons saw to that.

But Mitzi? Mitzi had a way of placing unexpected and peculiar valuations upon many matters. She was of the blood that holds tenaciously to what it has once seized upon. Like a turtle, she hung on immovably until it thundered.

Perhaps the sharp edge of the trouble was not that Parsons had not told her he was married. It was the fact that he *was*. Just what she hoped from his not being married Mitzi would not have acknowledged even to herself.

What Parsons did *not* know was that Mitzi was essentially and Orientally elemental. For such as Mitzi, "ten thousand stars shine down on Babylon; the desert well reflects but one." She had the soul of the Orient clamoring shamelessly and inadequately at its Occidental shell, guided by a mind sufficiently subtle to intrigue its way through any maze of conventions spread before her by the land of her choice.

Furthermore, if Mitzi was to Parsons the key to the portals of Bohemia Parsons was more to Mitzi. Parsons was a feather in her cap. It delighted her beyond measure to see his broad shoulders and scrubbed Saxon fairness and immaculateness of attire among her heterogeneous crowd of men, whose tubbings consisted of sparrow flutters in water carried in a pitcher from the hydrant on the floor below—an existence where godliness was child's play compared to cleanliness.

And so—admitting that the East is East, et cetera, et cetera—a summons from out Bohemia continued to present attractions to West End Avenue.

## II

WHEN Wall Street shut up shop in the autumn of 1914, Parsons found time hanging heavily on his hands. He was neither busy nor happy at not being busy.

His wife had plenty of money, some half-dozen times over what he possessed, and a way of clinging to it which, though not particularly irritating when things were well with him, yet caused him some not-nice quarter hours. Especially when he searched a future that held a possible bottomless slump of his securities. It was a sufficiently soul-satisfyingly wretched existence, even when one was affluent and independent of financial complications, to be Mrs. D. Webster Parsons' husband. One or two such quarter hours had gloomed, casting their shadows. He needed diversion to draw him into the sunlight.

For the first time in a week Parsons

smiled. It was when a note came to Wall Street from Mitzi. "Dear Parsons—" Mitzi's rhetoric was open to criticism, "I have studio tea Sunday afternoon. You oblige and make happy with your presents," and she was his "Mitzi."

Parsons smiled. Things were pretty bad at the West End apartment. A few nights before he had devoted himself in sheer weariness of spirit and self-defense to his lady at a boresome reception at a big hotel. Even the whirr of the limousine and the glass wall between them could not conceal from the chauffeur that his master, who was very popular with him, was in trouble.

"Believe me, bo," he remarked to himself as he listened to the acrimonious discussion at his back, "I'd stand for that line of talk just about one second and a half. If I had a wife like the missis, I'd beat her up three times a day!"

Parsons had his own way of obeying that impulse. He sought Bohemia. He went to Mitzi's teas. Writers, musicians, artists and going-to-bes; a Polish count and his wife, a Russian princelet who sculpted; a Hungarian violinist and his pretty pianiste, who, perhaps, was his wife; a Japanese artist and a couple of almost arrivals in the literary world, hungrily stoking for the next day upon mountains of sandwiches and lubricating with oceans of tea, with an occasional flirtation with the red Hungarian wine which Mitzi was wont to dispense none too liberally—such was the crowd.

It was in this crowd that Parsons first saw the Girl. At the moment when he spied her he was listening to smart conversation upon a subject several miles over his head, made by someone in whom he was not interested.

The Girl was young and pretty. Both her dress and the expression of her face, as she sat watching the strange crowd about Mitzi's buffet, showed him that she did not belong in this composite of embodied artistic inclinations, long hair and broad conventions.

"Look who's here!" said Parsons to

Parsons. And he shook off the smart conversationalist and galloped to her side.

He plumped himself on the deep red couch, determined upon philosophic research. He wanted to know who she was, what she did, and how she happened to be there and why. And after a gentle application of the Parsons-esque method, she told him all he wanted to know without his asking.

Mitzi, in a low-cut red gown, was at the piano playing Magyar music and singing in her high, staccato voice; the Hungarian violinist was at her side, swaying to the accompaniment of the violin tucked under his chin; a couple of other Hungarians joined their weird gutturals to Czardas time, deadening the conversation on the couch.

"I am a model—I think—" hesitated the Girl.

Parsons, leaning close to hear her, looked puzzled. "You think? Don't you know?"

"I suppose I am," she nodded her bright head at him. "I pose for Miss Janos."

"And where do you live?" He thirsted for information.

"I am living here with Miss Janos."

"You live here?" His surprise was emphatic. "How is that? Here! But where do you come from?"

A funny place for such as she to live—with Mitzi! Someway it did not seem quite right.

"Up-state," she replied. "Is that definite enough or not?"

"It is," Parsons assured her with conviction. "But you did not know Mitzi 'up-state'? No?"

"No," gravely. "I met Mitzi in a Sixth Avenue department store—and I was very unhappy and poor. She offered me a home and shelter and food."

Parsons leaned his head closer to hers. This was interesting. Mitzi, the thrifty little Hungarian, as a good Samaritan to an attractive young girl was distinctly a surprise.

"How did it happen? What were you doing in such a place?"



She outlined a bit of her insignificant history for him.

"It was the only place I could get work—and they paid me five dollars a week. I couldn't go back to my mother, for my stepfather hates me—besides, one doesn't want to own oneself a failure. And my brother couldn't do anything for me after he married. He is in China now with the Pacific Squadron. I kept house for him before he was married."

"What brought you to New York?"

"I—I," she stammered a little, "I thought it would be easy to find something to do—but when Miss Janos told me she would let me live with her awhile if I would pose for her. I was so hungry and tired she had to help me up the steps."

Poor little Girl! Posing for shelter and food; services whose value she did not know and which Parsons suspected shrewdly that Mitzi refrained from placing full price upon, feeling she had discovered a prize.

For the Girl was beautiful despite the fact that her white cloth dress showed unmistakable signs of having been manufactured by inexperienced hands. The broad-breasted yet virginal figure redeemed what it may have lacked in cut and fit. Exuberant youth and strength, the daring that sent a young girl to triumph over New York showed in her poise, and in every unconscious pose, free and rhythmic.

A something long time dormant mysteriously stirred somewhere within the Parsons breast when further questions brought him the details of her story; evidently there were some feelings which Mrs. Parsons had not been able to talk out of him. Under nailed-down covers hid certain springs of tenderness and sentiment which became astonishingly bubbly as the little history was unfolded bit by bit.

He looked about the red, red room, at Mitzi in her low-cut red gown—then he looked at the Girl in her simple white dress; and suddenly he felt distinctly old with knowledge and the fear o' God for the future. . . .

This was the beginning. . . .

At home, Mrs. Parsons asked him, as he drew back her chair to seat her for dinner, where he had been. He evasively retailed the latest talk at the Club. Fortunately for him, she had not telephoned there that afternoon.

### III

THAT night, before she went to sleep, the Metropolitan clock winked cheerfully four times red and twelve white at a girl as she lay awake reflecting upon the supreme miracle of having found a friend. Not a Hungarian, or a Russian, or a foreigner of any other funny "type," but an American man.

"Zat type is so-o inter-rest-ing; ze big—v'at you call it—ze Ch-ris-tee type?" said Mitzi, smiling teasingly, head on one side and eyes that shone like a wren's, as she looked Parsons over approvingly the next afternoon when he dropped in again for tea, "men vit' ze vonder-rfull physic—"

"Physique, Mitzi," implored Parsons, with a room-filling laugh, "phys-eeek—not phys-ic—"

"An' v'at ees eet—dat physic v'at you call not phys-eeek?" she inquired, thoroughly enjoying the delight Parsons exhibited in her mistakes.

"Physic, my dear Mitzi—well, physic is physic, but physique is"—he straightened himself to his big height and remarked his undoubted good looks in the mirror opposite—"what you see!"

"E 'as fine phys-eeek," repeated Mitzi, testing her English as she nodded her head at him, "you t'ink so, too, mees?" She turned with a sly look at the Girl.

The Girl flushed and then laughed also.

"You are quite splendid," she assured him frankly, "the best-looking man in New York, I'm sure!"

Parsons' soul expanded palpably under this barefaced flattery. The tired look about his eyes vanished as if by magic.

When Mitzi hurried out upon an alleged pre-engagement and left them alone, he would have sworn an oath to

the little Hungarian's entire unconcern in any interest in him beyond the merest friendship. And, as the door below slammed behind her, the tender smile that Mrs. Parsons had not seen since they honeymooned appeared upon his face.

Before the Girl could turn and seat herself on the couch, he had daringly put his arms about her and kissed her. He had been thinking every moment since he left her that this was exactly what he would do, and keep on doing until further notice.

She had been alarmed at first.

"How dared you?" she had protested. "What would Miss Janos say?"

Much cared Parsons for that and said so.

"I don't kiss men the first time I meet them," she informed him with a pretty girlish dignity, the force of which was slightly marred by the facts.

"This is the second time—besides, I am not men, and I'm mad about you—you beautiful child—" answered Parsons, patting her shoulder as they sat on the red divan. "You don't believe that one can do that—fall madly in love in an instant?"

She shook her head doubtfully. "I think not—" she said.

"Did I lose a moment rushing over to you when I saw you sitting here yesterday afternoon?" demanded Parsons, exhilarated to further efforts by proximity.

She smiled at him. "Well—you were standing over there talking to—what's her name? But that didn't mean anything. I shouldn't want to talk to her, either—"

"And I turned my back on her the very instant I laid eyes on you, didn't I? And tore over here beside you—and you don't call that love at first sight—when I was dying to kiss you even then? Then you don't know it when you see it—" he concluded. "I'll have to make you—that's all."

She appeared very childlike and innocent and trusting. She had a little clinging feminine way of an unsophisticated girlhood that appealed to what-

ever was strong and kind and good in him. Parsons reserved certain well-known, well-established hackneyed illusions, without which the average male creature cannot get on. But he had a derisive disapproval for anything outside of his own experience.

When he saw her rise with an easy swing and walk across the floor, he knew only that she gave him the impression of an alluring little goddess—that she was entirely unconscious of the forces within her. . . .

There must be no Hotspur methods in the matter. . . . However, this rather suited him. His gay cavalier days were over, even though he still preserved a waistline. *Timeo Danaos!* was his motto.

#### IV

THERE were telephone calls, and calls when Mitzi was absent; stolen hours of which Mitzi knew and kept silence; Mitzi's lips in a tight line when she saw—and no one knows what women do not see; they have eyes in the backs of their heads. Clinging hands, names that were caresses, unwonted pink in the cameo-like face of the girl.

The thing that began to matter to Parsons was the way in which the Girl's youth and his admiration stabbed through the everyday stuff of his life, and left it pierced with light, with an immense new interest through the rent. The warm mystery of her young face and the softness of a throat shadowed with golden hair—the stir, long unfelt, of proximity pervaded his existence.

And so, queerly enough, she became a necessity in his life; as much of a necessity, that is, as any woman could be to Parsons.

And later . . . ?

But Parsons was not one to worry over the future and he made no attempt to see beyond a satisfactory present. That their intimacy was likely to prove complex for her at some time or other was important, of course, but not nearly so important as that it might prove complex for him.

Necessity for any adjustment of the

situation was overshadowed by the spell which his infatuation had cast over him. With her he was blissfully happy and content, wherever they were, ubiquitous though Mitzi might be with her chaperonage. Away from her, he was restless and discontented, watching the hours drag until he should see her again. . . .

One spring-like afternoon Parsons crossed the Square. Under big trees naked of leaves from frosts and winds, there played in ragged dirtiness children from Thompson and Bleecker Streets—as in years past little aristocratic Knickerbockers in velvets and furs watched the fountain and dodged liveried carriages instead of motor trucks, taxicabs and buses.

A tall young Tuscan woman, with soft black eyes and dusky bare head, be-aproned in drab beneath a dingy saffron cloak, sank upon a bench before him. A small morsel of olive-tinted, much-soiled masculinity clung to her hand. A feminine replica was hanging to her skirts. The children scampered to keep warm within their scanty clothes. Parsons tossed them pennies and managed to exchange smiles with the matron. Then arose before him the grotesque counter vision of Mrs. Parsons with her tiny pampered pet on leash, taking it for its daily airing on the Drive.

When he arrived at the studio, the little miniature painter was volubly expatiating to the girl upon the powerful advantage of marketing in MacDougal Street over Sixth Avenue.

He smiled at the scene. Mitzi had just come in—loose blouse somewhere soiled, open upon her strong white throat, and pulled out at the waist band; a short black skirt, fringed as to hem, and heavy shoes—as thoroughly peasant in appearance as any of her countrywomen. She was laden with salads and fruits done up in damp newspapers.

"See, Par-rsons!" She was as happy as a child over her purchases, and holding aloft a big head of lettuce, she cried: "four cents for salad! On Sixt' Avenue, eight; see! Half so cheap! Yes? An' gr-rapes! I luff dose leetle

v'ite gr-rapes sweet as sugar-r. An' she luff them too! Sefen cents a pound at dose mar-rket—twelve on Sixt' Avenue—iss it not vonder-rful?"

Parsons and the girl laughed at her. "You're some marketer, Mitzi," said Parsons, approvingly. "You could teach a lot of 'em things about economy, and still live right, couldn't you?"

"Ve lear-rn dose t'ings in Hungary—we luff on a few cents a day dere. Here, eferyt'ing iss so expensiff—" she sighed, "I haff to do my own mar-rketing or I vould haff not'ing—"

Parsons had laid his arms carelessly over the shoulders of the girl, and both were enjoying this pretense of sad poverty.

Mitzi's attention was suddenly drawn from contemplation of her purchases to this little familiarity. She looked at them as if she had really just seen them for the first time. Her eyes widened, peculiarly, and showed red reflections.

And then—it came—in Mitzi's most innocent, childlike tones.

"An' does-s not Mrs. Par-rsons all-so do her own mar-rketing?"

A dense silence descended upon them. Parsons stood staring at Mitzi. And so she knew? That superb assurance of his cracked and shattered to pieces!

He marked unconsciously that the girl at his side had drawn away from him with a quick movement. And he saw only Mitzi's eyes blinking at him, like a cat's before it pounces on the mouse between its paws.

Seemingly as unconcerned as if she had not precipitated what, to Parsons, for the moment, was a real catastrophe, Mitzi began to gather up her purchases.

Parsons turned slowly from her to look at the girl, a strange feeling like black devils clawing at what he called his heart. Underneath the mask of his face strained all the will-power he could muster to hold himself silently. At the look of humiliation upon the girl's face, he could scarcely master his pity and rage, and his longing to wipe it away.

His own astonishment, too, was infinite—that Mitzi *knew*! By Jove, it was a facer!

Forgetting Mitzi, he stepped impulsively toward the girl.

She quietly moved beyond the touch of his outstretched hand.

"I thought you knew—" he pleaded, lamely, at her side.

Again there was silence.

She turned her back to him and looked out of the window into the darkening park, for the studio of the little Hungarian—one of the plutocrats of the Square—faced on the park. Through the pause there filtered the squawk of a motor car, a fire call from the street beyond, and the sound of a piano playing twilight music in an apartment overhead.

Then he heard her voice. It was girlish but it was proud, and the misery of it so apparent that the devils ceased clawing at its sound;

"How should I know? You did not tell me—"

"And Mitzi didn't?" he answered, weakly, and turned to look for Mitzi.

But Mitzi had discreetly disappeared with her salads and fruits. Her part was done.

"And you thought—I would—have—cared for you—had I known you were—married?" she flamed forth, proud as snow.

Parsons looked miserably at her.

"Let me explain—" he begged, incoherently, "I can't bear to see you—"

"Explain!" she cried, poignantly, turning to him a white face, "what is there to explain? And what good can an explanation do? Will you please go away?" and she returned to her unseeing stare out of the window.

Parsons came close and tried to put his arms about her. She quivered and grew so repellantly rigid that his arms dropped. He, himself, was pale, too; and he could scarcely credit that his overtures to "kiss and make friends" should receive a refusal; such a thing had never happened before!

He drew back, his assurance fully gone, when she again turned and said: "Aren't you satisfied yet? Go away!" She was the conqueror.

Parsons reached blindly for his hat

and started for the door. Out and down, and into the Square he went, sitting down on a nearby bench in the chill evening air.

He searched his brain for an inspiration to help unravel the tangle. Children played about him but he never saw them. Nothing seemed of any moment save that pained accusing face, and how he was going to compass the pride and hurt and pain he had caused.

He cursed himself and was mortified and bitter by turns. The utter impossibility that his little dream should so end! Nothing else pierced his consciousness.

Not a stir of wonderment as to when and how Mitzi had learned of his marriage, and why she should have withheld her knowledge from the girl. Manlike, it did not occur to him to attribute this silence to certain bitter unforgotten moments when Mitzi's feminine pride vanquished feminine passion; to a secret subtlety and sustained purpose growing from jealousy rooted deeper than that passion. Mitzi was apparently fond of the little girl.

He shook his head and sighed, as he contemplated his perfect patent-leather shoe-tips and dug his walking stick abstractedly into a hole in the pavement. The lines about his eyes reappeared and were all ready for the engagement at the Plaza with Mrs. Parsons that night. Finally he rose and hailed an uptown stage, in order to gain time to collect his various emotions and flatten them into a semblance of complacency for the sacrifice.

## V

PARSONS pieced together the remnants of what he was pleased to call his heart and appeared at the studio the very next afternoon. No one answered his rap.

He walked the Square for an hour—until dusk fell. He waited for someone to return and enter the old red-brick house, nervous as a boy of twenty, without sight of either the girl or the little Hungarian.

There was no answer to his telephone

calls. He had a bad thirty minutes of it and tried again next day. Mitzi answered and told him that the girl refused to speak to him. And she laughed at him as she told him.

This made Parsons angry. He dropped in at teatime, just to show them that he did not intend to be put off in any such manner. He found the girl alone. He was really shocked at sight of her face; it was white and drawn after a sleepless night. And her eyes were circled in black as if she had been weeping. . . .

Parsons harked back to a clean boyhood, and held up for her gaze many things tender and precious which should have been Mrs. Parsons's, and were not because she had not cared for them. He painted in pigments of phrase, pictures which were visions of Romance long since discarded, and ideals of Sentiment he had thought forgotten. He told the story of a real self which had died and been buried; and if he was sentimental over it, it was probably because absence and distance evoked old emotions. As they sat side by side on the couch, he clutched her hand in his as if he would never let it go.

He was afraid to look at her when he had finished, "tempting deity lest he perish." With that sense of the dramatic latent in masculinity in pursuit of its desires, he posed miserably humble, and his eyes looked straight before him.

After an interval of doubt-crammed silence, he spoke again, this time passionately invoking pity, begging to retain what he had gained under false pretenses; giving as his excuse for it the fear that if she had known, she might have withdrawn her friendship. How was he to live—without her in his life?

He asked forgiveness first, last and always—and her friendship only. To have hurt her was killing him. Was she going out of his dreary, barren life, and leave him to go on his empty way as before?

He had been so lonely—and misunderstood; now he was the most unhappy

man in the universe—and so on and on *a astra per aspera!* . . . Of course, it ended with her in his arms.

She wept out her own unhappiness and loneliness on his beautifully tailored shoulder, and I think that Parsons shed a few tears also.

"There are delicate boundaries within the realm of the eternal womanly," writes Sudermann, "in which one is sorely puzzled as to what one had better put into an envelope—a poem or—a cheque."

Nice nuances did not trouble Parsons often; but now he approached nearer a desire to express himself in poetry than since his early youth. He held her close and she leaned her head on his shoulder. He lifted her face to his and looked into her eyes until he became dizzy, and her own closed softly . . . suddenly she was lifted against him playing the only cards she held—cards of which she scarcely guessed the significance—and playing them into the hands of Life and Parsons—and Mitzi. As suddenly she struggled out of his embrace and covered her face with her hands.

"It's all wrong—and bad—and hopeless," she sobbed. "Why should it have happened this way? Why didn't I have the courage to keep you away from here? Why didn't you stay away—you're a man—and big and strong—" It was the cry of a child.

"Not strong where you're concerned, dear," he murmured fondly, with just the proper quota of weakness-in-your-presence and strength of man-seeking-his-mate in his voice.

And, responsive, dangerously so, to the sound of the magic chord, he added other wild and wonderful something-nothings which from time immemorial other Parsonses—and truer lovers, too—have whispered under the same conditions. Early dusk had fallen to darkness. Lights gleamed about the Square and the room was full of shadows.

It was time the little portrait-painter had returned, and Parsons experienced a distinct feeling of aversion to permitting her knowing eyes either to view



or interfere with a situation which was progressing remarkably to his liking. . .

"Put on your hat and come on out to dinner with me," he suggested, looking at his watch.

"Alone?" she asked. "Hadn't we better wait for Mitzi?"

"No—you little goose—come on. We don't know when she'll be home. Do you want a chaperone every time you go out with me?" with a relieved boyish laugh; "I want to put my feet under the table across from yours alone for once. There are lots of things I want to say to you. Come on—"

## VI

THE girl thrust her arm through Parsons's in order to keep up with his swinging stride through the paths across the Square. The folds of the plain little suit she wore clung in the cold wind to the long lines of the extreme slenderness which made her so desirable a model.

To her surprise, as they crossed toward Fifth Avenue, Parsons hailed a taxicab. Before she realized what had happened, she was seated beside him and the cab had faced about uptown.

She was looking out the window at the six o'clock home-goers, concentrating upon each passerby a gaze that would have been a stare had she the opportunity for focusing it. In that surging mass each unit was but a tiny atom—she, herself, who had felt even less, was suddenly an important being rolling swiftly along on the cushioned seat of a taxicab between two rivers of humanity. But Parsons' thoughts were not with the home-goers—he was thinking of the most suitable place to dine. He came to a decision as they reached Twenty-third Street.

Parsons had mastered the art of ordering a dinner that was a poem. First there was a gentle wine from southern France; Parsons cannily eschewed the pungent cocktail as being too shocking for a taste little beyond lollipops. The wine came in a seductive glass delicate as a breath; no matter how many resistances there were of fear and youth

and emotion on guard, the girl sipped it—it was not to be resisted. The very air she breathed, interpenetrated with life and action, called her to become a part of the scene.

A laughing party, its women clothed in rainbow, starshine and gold, floated in on a haze of light that dazzled her soft eyes. They were accompanied by men straight and magazine-covery, none of whom were straighter and more magazine-covery than the man across the little magic table from her. And Parsons bowed to one of the women! And with what unaffected recognition and even intimacy!

One of the men had turned to look at them, sitting in their corner, his eyes lingering longer on Parsons's companion than on Parsons—which she did not know. Nor did she know that the graceful iridescent being who had nodded so comradely to Parsons was a buyer of evening dresses for a Fifth Avenue shop where Mrs. D. Webster Parsons bought some of her gowns; nor could she have dreamed of how Parsons, having accompanied his wife on a shopping orgy one day, had been Mr. Christopher Columbus on the job and—oh, well, she wouldn't have believed it had anyone told her, for beside being young she was in love, and when one is young human nature shocks one.

Parsons was having a beautiful time. Conversation fairly dripped from him.

"Do you see that tall blonde lady over there, dear?" he pointed to a slim resplendent creature who entered, escorted by a corpulent gentleman in seeming danger of either overflowing or bursting his evening clothes. "That's Mrs. Van This— No, dear, he is not her husband. You would be surprised how people live uptown—she has already had three—yes—husbands—and no doubt the man with her—Mr. That, would like to be her next, and may be—sometime, but—her last won't permit it. No, dear—she is not divorced yet—but—"

The girl, already awed by her sur-

roundings, was not a little impressed by all this.

"—you see in New York, love is a matter of chance, marriage is a matter of money, and divorce—a matter of course—"

She laughed, and so added one more jewel to his halo—that of cleverness.

Parsons was pleased at her appreciative applause—the epigram was a good one, in fact, it had always been good—long before even he had read it.

"All they say about New York society is quite true—and then some—as I happen to know. As for myself—as I have told you—but look! There goes Count Van-This-and-That—you remember I was telling you and Mitzi the other night how he acted at the club? I simply cannot stand for such people—they gain admission to Good Society and then repay their debt of gratitude in such a boorish manner."

And so, while the place slowly filled, Parsons entertained her. Across the table he watched her keenly, appraisingly, her young face transfigured by imagination.

"This is our very first dinner alone, dear," he leaned over to whisper. "You didn't think—when you opened your eyes this morning that you would be here to-night—did you?"

She shook her head. "Indeed no," she breathed, "it's wonderful—"

It would take more than a glass of wine to make her forget that awakening—the looking forward into a dreary, empty day; the utter friendliness, the agony of loss, so keen in youth, the humiliation of her discovery and yes—Mitzi's lack of sympathy and understanding.

She had asked the little Hungarian, "Why did you not say that Mr. Parsons was married?" and her tones had held reproach.

"Hum—vell—but v'y didn't *he* tell you?" coolly answered the little portrait-painter with a shrug of her shoulders. "It's none of *my* pus-ness, iss it? I t'ought he tole you hiss-self. An'—after all it makes no difference, does it? You know it now that he been mar-

ried—an' you not see him again—v'at—no?"

But after all what difference could it make? She had been a fool—she had permitted herself to be blinded by her loneliness, her happiness in finding a friend, by her still scarcely awakened love for Parsons, most of all by her youth and un-experience. She had merely drifted on a wave of inarticulate desire. With his kisses still upon her lips and the warmth and rapture of her now awakened passion lingering in her blood, she could only trust him—that the things he had hinted for the future, from which he had verbally eliminated Mrs. Parsons, would come true.

The instant she yielded her ground on the issue of his marriage, he felt the battle already more than half won. Parsons knew by instinct and to a tittle with just what doubts, fears, resistances, reactions and reflexes he would have to contend. And one by one he met and mastered them. The Burgundy inspired recklessness even in his young-middle-aged arteries. He reached across the table and caught her hand in his; at that touch she drooped her eyelids and felt the throbbing of her heart up to her ears.

"You're as pink as the baby you are," he declared, and what else was there for her to do than grow pinker than ever?

She felt herself lifted straight out of the guarded silences into a golden wonder. Gladness, glamour, laughter, tremulous with unshed tears, and the freshness of love now impossibly possible, the light that never was on sea and land dizzily glimmering—floating—drifting about her; the unknown beckoning, the inner senses thrusting themselves forward, the stinging savor of life and love on her lips—the urge—the unconscious fear—the glory of anticipated surrender . . . but always—the fear. . . .

Parsons watched her doubting—fearing—hoping—yet, withal, sure. He would not have been Parsons had he not been planning. He had put as much

thought into this difficult Platonic matter as he usually expended on a difficult stocks-and-bonds problem—something indefinitely fine about this child demanded fine methods and his finest efforts. He was planning now how he was going to divorce her from her dangerous alliance with Mitzi—

He looked about the tables nearest them and counted seven girls, all younger even than his companion, smoking their after-dinner cigarettes—a baker's dozen or so in their thirties, and several ladies old enough to have known better. His subconsciousness, prompted by this sight, was working somewhat after this manner: How am I going to arrange to get her away from Mitzi's dragon eye?

"Do you know, dear," he said, "the more I think of it, the more I think that you would be better off in other surroundings? To tell you the truth—and I know that you will agree with me—it's rather a queer bunch that goes down to Mitzi's. Not just the proper atmosphere that I care to have you live in—"

Parsons was no musician nor rhetorician, but he knew the value of cadences and modulations. But that small personal pronoun assumed hyperbolic dimensions to one whose vision was now almost entirely obscured by the glamour of Parsons and Parsonality.

"But—what can I do?—I have nowhere else—" she returned with child-like dependence upon his knowledge and experience.

"Well—we'll have to arrange it somehow—perhaps some of the other women painters could use you also—or you can find some light pleasant office work—yes—" he continued with a nod of finality, "we'll have to arrange it somehow—"

"I have thought of that—" she answered, "but Miss Janos has been very kind. And I should hate to leave her—and where could I go?"

"She is paying you pretty well now?" he hazarded the guess.

"Oh, no—" she assured him. "She gives me only my board and room. But

I'll have to get something else soon—I must have some clothes—"

"What!" exploded Parsons, "and she has never paid you a cent?"

"No—she said that I was not worth any more—"

"Well—if that isn't the limit of everything—don't you know you can get crackerjack money for posing—you—with that figure and face?"

Parsons's knowledge of the remuneration of artists' models at first hand equalled in fragmentariness his knowledge of art, but his knowledge of Mitzi's financial methods was founded on a sound basis. This revelation, however, stunned him for a moment.

"Well—Mitzi is certainly some little economizer—" he remarked with a perturbed grin, "we'll have to find some other answer, I guess. I know personally that there is money in it—furthermore that she can well afford to pay you what you could get anywhere else, besides giving you a room. That is, if you are an efficient model. And you must be or—I know Mitzi—you would not have worked this length of time for her—even for nothing but your board and room. Certainly something must be done—"

In the face of all this eloquence and friendliness, the girl gradually yielded to a sense of her own helplessness. She found herself cared for, protected, surrounded by tenderness that was to be unfailing, that was in some way connected with a wonderful, strong and masculine being upon whom she could depend for all the rest of that youth which she was told faded so hardly in New York. This strength was to look after her and stand between her and that world of New York which she had dared and which even her buoyant young spirit now feared.

In after years the whole remainder of that evening was like a dream. She forgot yesterdays and to-morrows, and grimaced and ate and drank and spoke and above all—felt—numbly, yet vividly, with a sense entirely separated from the senses she had known before. And with that dream sense she heard every-

thing that Parsons said to her, and accepted with calm agreement his plans for the miraculous future. She was absolutely convinced that never again would anxiety come into her life; she knew that all her doubts and fears and despairs, her tears, her distrust had been needless—and were things of the past.

She dipped her fingers mechanically in the finger-bowl, her eyes on Parsons. He looked at his watch. He beckoned a waiter and gave an order. A few moments later she rose from the table and followed Parsons's Christy-Underwood breadth of shoulders and height down the long aisle of shining tables, most of them filled with late diners, herself breathless and faintly physically uneasy at curious sensations of limb and sight—all a part of the dream.

She reached home in the exalted mood of one who has seen visions. . . .

## VII

WHEN Mitzi had left the studio that afternoon she had left a depressed, silent young female of the species mourning the perfidy of the male. She returned to find an empty, red, red studio, no hat or jacket hanging where the girl's were wont to hang, and no word of where she had gone. Mitzi quizzed the janitress, learned that her protégée had left the studio with a man, and guessed that it was Parsons.

What Mitzi thought about it she repressed. Especially as she found something even more interesting to her than either the girl or Parsons. And that something was literally Money From Home.

When princes, principalities and provinces go to war, they lose all sense of meum and teum. What is yours and mine automatically becomes theirs. Castles, cars and cash are liable to confiscation.

Canny people look ahead in these matters. Mitzi's relatives, with the tendencies of their race, remembered at this time and just in time, that Mitzi was still in the land of freedom. They

could send neither castles or cars; but they could send cash. They had, therefore, written Mitzi a letter. It came on the afternoon, so memorable, of which we write, and Mitzi clean forgot to be angry at the girl and Parsons for their defection of six or seven hours.

Also, it put another phase on matters. Parsons, as a man of business, was, indeed, a Tower, a Conning Tower. Mitzi possessed all the instincts of the financier, but she lacked the ability to scan intelligently the news on the money page of the paper and act accordingly.

The ride home in the taxicab had been made almost in silence. Parsons, manlike, triumphantly rested in a state of calm acceptance of facts, disturbed only by the secret hope that Mitzi had retired for the night, in which case, he would be under no obligation of courtesy to accompany the girl further than the outer door of the studio.

The girl, her pulses still quivering, leaned her head against his shoulder, content also, yet still in that state of visioned unreality—floating on the waves of her dreams. If she had any conscious thought on the matter it was, as was Parsons's, a hope that she would not have to face Mitzi under the red light that circled the center of the studio.

The girl remembered vaguely voicing that hope; and that Parsons answered that he would fix it all right with Mitzi. He would say that they had been to the theatre.

As they descended from the cab—at the corner whence Parsons had thoughtfully directed it—both looked up at the studio windows.

A light shone forth. Mitzi was still awake!

The girl's brain registered fear; but her heart reassured her—Parsons!

And Parsons braced for the encounter.

It was a shock, therefore, to be greeted as they entered with:

"Vell—an' v're you been so late?

I sit up an' wait for you—I haff great news!"

"Good—good—!" exclaimed Parsons, with an inward breath of relief. He had never fathomed Mitzi's moods, but he knew that every little woman has a language of her own. "Well—come on, let's hear the news!"

"It's money—" answered Mitzi, her eyes sparkling, "my peoples in Budapest—dey sen' it to me—ve infest it for d'em—eh, Par-rsons? V'y should all d'eir safings of years an' years go—pe confis-scate? See?" she tapped the letter before her on the table, "I write dem ve take care of it for d'em. Eh, v'at, Par-rsons?"

A man may be in love and still remember other things. To-night Parsons reopened his desk, and he and Mitzi confabbed upon the abstruse subject of stocks and bonds for nearly an hour while the girl sat alone on the red divan, enveloped in a rosy mist. Seeing that she felt just a little lonely and out of it, Parsons threw her a glance now and then to keep her in the company. . . .

When he crossed the Square on his way home, he had made up his mind to one conclusive thing—the girl should remain with Mitzi—for the time being, at any rate. It was dangerous to sue for that divorce from her surroundings now. He must keep friends with Mitzi—money to invest was rare these days in Wall Street. . . .

Each night in the past, since he had met the girl, as he had taken his way through the park, before his eyes had been a burst of light, flecked with golden spots and each of them held a little picture of the girl. To-night—well, love is one thing—money is another!

The spots were still there and each held a picture. But the face of the girl had faded slightly, though the spots were still golden. . . .

Again the Metropolitan clock winked many times red and white at the girl before she went to sleep. A tidal wave of exultation flowed through her brain throughout the night. The morning

sun saw a troubled, childish sleeper, whose rest was disturbed by a nightmarish consciousness of danger—of fear—

Unknowing, she threw her arm across her face . . . and woke with a start, almost a scream. . . .

## VIII

THE day following Parsons found himself, in the rush of business, unable to do more than make a casual, short, business-like call, during which he showed an inordinate interest in the foreign express service in general (with the war upon us and our letters and all going astray and being tied up!) and in the Hungarian mails in particular.

After which he left early in order to meet the rush of engagements which called him—with a most perfunctory notice of the girl. The masculine mind is so elaborately complex when it is putting something over! Parsons saw no danger of being too smooth.

Another out of the ordinary event of the day was that the girl found someone whom she knew. It was a girl with whom she had been associated in the Sixth Avenue department store—referred to vaguely as Beatrice. Mitzi was under the impression that her name was Beatrice Walker. At any rate, it seemed that Beatrice and she had been close friends. They had something in common—some congeniality of spirit, which urged and beckoned them together each evening for the next three or four days.

Once or twice she dined with Beatrice. Other evenings she only slipped across the Square and spent a couple of hours after dinner, it appeared, in the house in Waverly Place where Beatrice roomed. Her friendship with Beatrice appeared to make her very happy, as she stayed rather late and when she came in she was radiant.

Adorably lovely she had become—Mitzi found her a more perfect model than ever—line on line, and color on color.

And then came a wonderful night in



February. All the wonders of the Infinite were piled deep with snow. No matter if under the heavy blanket of white there lay in wait the treachery lurking for unwary footsteps of deep puddles and underground streams, the trees were laden with beauty, and the night overhead was a fairyland that reached up and upward through a pillowy veil of silver feathers to the sky.

Parsons swung from a Sixth Avenue car at Eighth Street, big and sleek in his raincoat, and waited under the L station. The streets were lakes of slush.

A few moments later he saw her trudging warily through the snow, vivid and smiling, her cheeks pink as bridesmaid roses.

She waved her hand at him across the street under the street light, as darkness had descended with the blanket of white. He motioned her to wait. A moment later he measured the puddle, swung his arms and landed beside her.

"Hello, honey!" he beamed upon her. "Are you soaked through?"

"Isn't it glorious?" she breathed, her eyes glowing into his. "The Square is like the winter palace of the fairies. Come on down and look at it—"

He shook his head. "Wait until later," he admonished. "The winter palace of the fairies is much too near the studio for comfort just now. What is Mitzi doing?"

"She was busy when I left."

"You told her—that you were—?"

"Going to have dinner with Beatrice—" she answered, with the trace of confusion in her face which always appeared at the necessity for deception in this matter of meeting Parsons without the studio.

"Do you think she will go out for dinner?"

"I think not—" she assured him, "she has some work she wants to clean up—and it is so stormy. I think Miss Janos doesn't like a storm as I do—"

"If you are sure she is not going out, we might have dinner down around

here somewhere—" he suggested, "instead of going uptown—it is so bad underfoot. I was almost tempted to telephone you not to come out—but I hadn't the courage. I wanted to see you—" He didn't add that having had some trouble in arranging matters at the West End apartment covering his absence, he disliked missing the opportunity. "I suppose you have got your feet wet, too," he added, anxiously.

"Good gracious, yes—" she acknowledged with a laugh, "they were that before I had crossed the street to the Square from the studio."

"Oh—you should have rubbers on," and Parsons looked down at his own shining new ones. "You'll have a cold from this ducking."

"Grandmother!"—she laughed back at him again, a lilt in her voice and heart. "Old maid! I hate rubbers! I never wear 'em! And I never take cold—how can anyone take cold when they are happy, goose? It's only cross-grained, irritable folks who get colds—and serves 'em right, too!" Thus, Youth, magnificently!

"You'll come with me, just the same, young lady, and get a pair," said Parsons, firmly, taking her by the arm. Thus Middle-Age!

And she went. For—

"Wait—" he commanded.

In another minute he had picked her up in his arms and had carried her through the brown flood, setting her down on the other side of the street.

As she slid from his clasp to the curbstone, he gave her a little hug and she glowed back at him.

Then he marched her into a little Sixth Avenue shoe-shop and teasingly had fitted her pretty feet with "goloshes," as she called them.

After which momentous delay, they fared forth for dinner.

If one is an inhabitant of Greenwich village one knows well a small walled-in—*brasserie*, one calls it, if one has been in Paris—red-ink joint, in pure Manhattan-ese—on West Tenth Street. Here, in times past, artists painted pictures for a now and then meal—pic-

tures which a reminiscent, ever-advertising proprietor allows to remain on the walls.

Parsons knew about the West Tenth Street place. He had been taken there by a former newspaper reporter who was now a Big Editor, who had told him its interesting history, which he was now passing on to the girl.

In a far corner under the balcony they sat, and the dinner had progressed leisurely from the steaming soup, served in a tureen large enough to take a bath in, to the cheese and the thick black coffee. Parsons finished his wine to the last drop, and, lighting a cigarette, leaned back with a sigh of repletion.

As he did so, in the act of throwing the match on the tray, he held his hand in amazement. The girl looked at him, startled. Something unusual had caught his attention, centered upon the small tables at the balcony rail above them.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Good Lord—there's Mitzi!" he exclaimed. "Better turn around and speak to her! How long do you suppose she has been there?"

Mechanically she turned about as she was bade. And Parsons, too, smiled and nodded gaily at the little Hungarian, with an ease he was far from feeling in his marrow.

Mitzi answered the greeting too politely for sincerity—and then, she beckoned to the waiter.

Parsons was saying to the girl, "I suppose we had better ask her down here to our table! Or—is she leaving? I'll go and see—"

Rising hastily, and threading his way as fast as he well could through the many small tables crowded close in the small first floor room, he got to the narrow staircase leading to the balcony. When he reached the balcony rail and the table occupied by Mitzi, however, he found that she had paid her reckoning and disappeared. Parsons looked about for her, even descending the outer steps to see if he could catch a view of her going down Tenth Street. But she had vanished into the snowstorm.

He returned to his companion and sat down. Parsons looked at the girl and the girl looked at Parsons. The situation worried him; however, he felt himself equal to it. No one so magnificently sure of himself could harbor anxiety for long. He had everything he wanted, he always had had it, and of course, he always would have it.

But his companion was not so sure of herself—or of what Mitzi would say. An ugly little fear poked itself up into the back of her head. She was suddenly smitten with a sense of her part in the deception. The lies she had told were swiftly preparing for their own execution.

But punishment is never so hard when shared. There was Parsons—a wonderful being to whom one might cling, who would always protect one, upon whom one might always depend.

"What do you think she'll say to us?" she almost whispered.

"Don't you worry, dear, about that—" he answered boldly. "We'll fix it up with her somehow—don't ever kiss the devil 'til you meet him!" and he smiled reassuringly. "You just leave it all to me when we get there—I know how to handle Mitzi. Come on—let's get out of here!"

But despite assurance and reassurance, the uncomfortable feeling remained with her. Her lies and her deception had worked this trouble. Womanlike, she was willing to bear upon her young shoulders the whole burden of it—the object of her young adoration should not be made responsible.

If Mitzi proved refractory—if she were going to blame anyone for having lied, she—the girl—would take the responsibility—all of it. And she could always go away—she was under no obligation to remain with Mitzi. There were other niches for her in this great city of New York—now that she had someone—someone vitally interested in her welfare.

She would shield Parsons—and her heart expanded with the marvel of the thing—she was but too willing to do so

—for the marvel of having it to do for him she loved! . . .

## IX

HAVING drunk her quota of quasi-chianti, Mitzi did not have to wait for any of the sensations of the Morning After. She had all of them then and there.

In the time intervening between her soup and coffee, she had worked herself into a choking rage of fury, of jealousy of youth and beauty, and thence to malice and envy. She rained down exclamation marks upon the heads of her unconscious friends, reviewed the events of the past, and thought and thought. As she plodded out into Sixth Avenue, after giving Parsons the slip, her little flat feet slapped the water in the puddles and she cared not one whit that she splashed herself knee-high with snow and black ooze.

Her first impulse had been to walk down from that balcony and to the corner where she had discovered the girl who had lied to her, and Parsons, and confront them with their guilt. Then she had veered and decided to wait and see what they would do.

It was in a black mood that she re-entered the red, red studio after her sloppy, sloshy walk. And when, ten minutes later, *they* entered, she was seated in the glow of a lamp in a shameless crimson petticoat, red as to cheeks and seeing red at once the cyclone struck!

"You vicked girl! You—Parr-rsons? How dar-re you tr-reat me like dis?" she screamed.

Parsons felt the girl shrink back against him in fright, her eyes staring into the flaming face of the little Hungarian. He, too, was shocked into silence; whatever he had done, he felt no responsibility to Mitzi for his good conduct or bad. The girl at his elbow, gathering herself together, opened her lips to speak, but before a sound came the storm broke anew, filling the big room with words.

"An' I took you in, you ungr-rateful gir-rl—v'en you haff not efen a cent to

puy you a r-roll—v'en you were star-rf-ing! My Gott—" with upraised hands, "an' how you haff lied to me—*me*—! How I haff nursed a ser-rpent in my preast—" she hissed, "peegs, bourgeois, peasts—" carried along by her own eloquence. "Ah—you haff tr-reat' me like I been a ser-rfant—" and there followed a diatribe of protestations of her superiority as violently contrasted with the inferiority of birth and breeding of the culprits before her.

Parsons let her rave on with no attempt to dam the torrent. His lips quivered with a mixture of surprise and desire to laugh at the absurdity of it.

The girl was trying to explain: "Oh, Miss Janos, I am so sorry—indeed, I am—" Unaccustomed to Hungarian volatility, her amazement at its airing and her sense of guilt forced whatever humor might have been extracted from the crudeness of Mitzi's attack into the background. "We meant no harm, really—please listen to me, won't you?"

"Oh, I vill lis-sten—I vill lis-sten all right—if you vill tell me v'ere do you go all dose odder nights v'en you say you go see your Peatrice Valker. I will lis-sten v'en you tell me v'y you lie to me an' say you go dere v'en all de time you mean to go vit' Par-rsons. I vill lis-sten v'en you tell me dat—"

Mitzi's arrow had drawn blood. Parsons fidgeted. The girl's face became scarlet at the insult.

"You prazen gir-rl—he's a married man—" squealed Mitzi.

"Yes—you have known it all the time—and why didn't you tell me at first?" retorted the girl, bravely; "and yet you went about with him alone," she added.

"But you vas d'ere—"

"Then you never went anywhere alone with him before I came?" demanded the girl with firm insistence.

The fiery little Hungarian's eyes blinked felinely and she bounced up and down with suppressed venom. At any other time, Parsons, with an eye on the dramatics, would have grinned. But this was melodrama in which he might be cast as the corpse.

Suddenly the scene was shifted. The

girl went swiftly to the side of the little portrait-painter, who, perched in her brilliantly arabesqued draperies on the edge of her chair, her toes just touching the floor, looked ready to pounce at the first one to say a word. She dropped on her knees beside Mitzi.

"Dear Miss Mitzi," she entreated, gently, "won't you please listen to me? I am very sorry that I lied to you to-night. It has all been my fault—every bit of it. I was very rude to have done it—to have gone out with Mr. Parsons—I never dreamed that you would—care—"

That last phrase was unfortunate. Mitzi looked down at the girl, and her momentary triumph at this exhibition of humility received an unintended but rude shock.

"Care? I care?" she almost screamed, throwing back her head.

She thrust out her hand and struck the girl so roughly that she staggered on her knees and almost fell backward.

"An' v'y should I—Mitzi Janosche—care for v'at such r-rotten peoples as you do—you an' Par-rsons? You go 'vay from my house an' stay away! You, too, Parsons—go home to your wife! An' you—" her outstretched hand melodramatically indicating the humiliated girl, "vill you leaf my house—or vill I haff to put you off my doorsteps vit' my own hants?"

Parsons helped the girl to her feet. Completely crushed by the situation, she walked slowly across the room to her little hall-bedroom—a picture of helpless, hurt girlhood.

Parsons's eyes followed her every embarrassed step until the door closed behind her. His own thoughts were one confused jumble, and the Parsons agile mind, fitted by feverish experiences to conquer crises, sparred for time before turning to face the situation. Then it responded, game as always.

The seat on the Exchange; the West End Avenue apartment; Society; Mrs. D. Webster Parsons; each exacted from Parsons a toll of slavery. But Mitzi's devotion had been without any exaction, not once had he received a hint that the

season for Parsons-worship would ever be anything but open.

Parsons, true to type—everybody's first love and nobody's last—had flirted with Mitzi, flattered her outrageously. In a thousand subtle ways he had surrounded her with an aura of gossamer caresses. The misunderstanding of his attentions, the jealousy, the resentment of Mitzi's proprietorship, skipped his vanity and landed on his nerves.

Inwardly he raged at the situation, remarkably like three angry bees buzzing about his head. He found himself inexplicably rasped. He was so rasped that he felt very strongly that everyone else should know just how he felt. If they didn't they should be made to. Not rudely. Nor uncouthly. But kindly and firmly should they be made to. First—with an expression of suave surprise that anyone should so far have forgotten him—or—herself as to dictate to *him* a course of conduct. Then, with a nonchalant urging that he—or—she should see things as they were. And finally—he would leave him—or—her to implore his pardon for his—or—her having acted with such confounded asininity. It was part and parcel of the Parsons shrewdness to jump before the other fellow leaped.

Just as, in his imagination, he saw the present interferer with affairs which were his own thus abject at his feet, he was interrupted by Mitzi's "Meestaire Par-rsons—" in a voice as sweet as honey; then measuredly purring; "I vonder v'at your wife would say if she knew—if I tol' her—" Mitzi's eyes rested for just a moment on the telephone, "d'at you—if I tol' her all about dis?"

The Parsons method of procedure was suddenly lost in a cataclysm. Several other things went with it, including the dignity upon which he had banked. Controlling the expression of his face to that of one humoring a refractory, spoiled child, Parsons deliberately began shifting himself out of his top-coat which he still wore, and laying it on a chair, placed his cane upon it.

Then he drew a chair beside Mitzi's.

Seating himself, he bent close, and reaching out his hand, just touched hers as it lay on her lap.

"My dear—" in his most candidly convincing manner, "what is this thing that has come between me and the best friend I have in the world—that could cause her to forget, even for a single minute, that this wonderful friendship of ours is too sacred a thing to be trampled upon?"

The better to emphasize this speech, he leaned closer. Slowly he lifted his hands and they hovered a moment about her face. With one he tilted it tenderly, the other resting lightly on her hair. Then he gazed soulfully into her eyes and reverently, as one softly kisses a holy relic, he rested his lips a fleeting moment on her forehead. With face averted, he paused for an instant before raising his eyes to mark the effect of the treatment.

It was working. The anger, the defiance which she had displayed previously seemed to have disappeared. The hard lines about her mouth had vanished. She no longer presented the front of an irritated queen; it was more that of a debutante being proposed to by the man she fully intends accepting but keeps in suspense, impelled by immemorial feminine reflexes.

Her face plainly said two words, "Go on!" But she said no word. Judgment should have breathed to Parsons that a woman silent is a woman thinking. But, before the warmth radiating from the flame he had rekindled with his few endearing words and the touch of his lips, his shrunken garment of self-esteem was expanding after its cold shower.

Vanity caught him off guard. Mitzi was thinking—and while she thought, she weighed dangerously with oriental bias the value of each word and look, testing them with the acid of feminine intuition.

"My dear—" he continued, his hand grasping hers closely, "you're a silly girl to let this—disturbing—er—element—weaken our mutual faith and the strength of our attachment." Parsons

was placing his words skillfully; well did he know the value of both the "silly" and the "girl" to the woman facing the hurdle of forty.

And then he accomplished an inspiration. He clasped her in his arms. He kissed her. Here was something tangible as an earnest of his sincerity—he was giving a real demonstration—a kiss—moreover his first—to Mitzi!

For a moment only she had struggled. Then he felt her relax against him and her arms about his neck. It was done. She was wax in his hands now; and he saw no necessity for further speech or effort. All need for added persuasion was eliminated in the most adequately simple manner possible.

She turned a bit in his embrace.

"But Par-rsons—" was it mere coquetry he heard in her voice? "I t'ink d'at you are in luff vit' her," she said, "ain't you, jus' a leedle be-et?"

Parsons concentrated on the matter in hand.

"With a child?" he asked imperturbably, raising his brows. "Why—she is nothing but a little girl! *You* should know me better than that, Mitzi. And when she's gone—we'll be the same good friends as of old—better perhaps, because our friendship will have been successfully tested."

Mitzi demurred. Parsons fenced. He was inwardly planning an easy arrangement of the matter later by finding another home for the girl, somewhere away from the watchful guarding eye of Mitzi—an eye that in future would be unsurpassed for vigilance. Mitzi might be fooled once if it were accomplished with her back turned. But napping now? Never!

He was so elated at the progress of the matter that he seated himself on the arm of Mitzi's chair and kissed her again. It was a kiss of almost gratitude.

"I do not think it wise *at all*—Mitzi," he was explaining (the italics are Parsons's, not mine). "Things were so much better before she came. We were friends down to the ground; we went around together and saw things together. We never had a difference of



opinion even—and there, think what has happened—all this over really *nothing at all!* steering a skillful middle course; “if there had been just *you* and *me*, it would not have occurred. No—*believe me*, Mitzi, I know what is best. Later you will agree with me. She had better go. And then—Mitzi—with the—er—disturbing element gone—we will be as happy as before—”

## X

HE was bending over her so absordedly that he did not hear the door open.

The girl had returned. She had hastily thrown her small belongings into her suitcase; this she set down within the room as she entered. Parsons straightened awkwardly and rose. Mitzi, flushed, leaned back in her chair—triumphant and smiling.

Parsons turned sick. A certain luminous perception leaped upon him that she had heard, guessed, and that all was lost. His glance swept her from the bright hair under the simple hat to the tips of her little shoes—the most eminently desirable thing in the whole round wide world to him—just then.

As for the girl, the sheer contrast between what she had expected to find upon her return to the big red room, and the sum and substance of what she had sensed during her noiseless entrance, indicated to her a calamitous climax to this day already crammed full of emotions.

The humiliation Mitzi had inflicted was forgotten. Indignation unfurled its scarlet banner in her cheeks.

She crossed swiftly to Mitzi and held out her hand.

“Good-bye, Miss Mitzi—” she said, her lips quivering in a vain attempt to steady them.

But she betrayed no evidence of knowledge that there was a third person present in the room.

Here was a sequence of things Mitzi had omitted to consider. She had been preoccupied with the Parsons part of the problem. That the girl should assert an unexpected independence came in the nature of a shock. Mitzi slid

from her chair and stood looking up at the girl with bright eyes of astonishment.

“But—” hesitated Mitzi, obviously nonplussed, “you do not go like dis, my dear?”

“You told me to go—” returned the girl, simply, plainly anxious that the interview should be at an end. Her hand dropped to her side when Mitzi made no motion to take it.

“Oh, vell—but I not mean dose t’ings v’at I say v’en I been ver’ angr-ry! Dis temper-r’ment of mine—you not mind dat! I not vant you to go—I say I vant you to go but I not mean dat! You stay here—we be goot frents now—yes?” An ingratiating tone was in her almost incoherent words.

Parsons shifted his eyes uneasily, his lips trying ineffectually to form words to fit the occasion. The girl had not even looked in his direction. She shook her head at Mitzi and, though her manner showed the cruel stress under which she labored, her answer was decisive:

“No—thank you—I appreciate your kindness—but, I couldn’t stay, of course. I had better go—”

“But—v’ere do you go?” impatiently insisted Mitzi, “eet ees too late to fin’ anyv’ere else tonight. Much better stay here, my dear—I not vant you to go—”

“Thank you—no—” was the girl’s answer, as she turned with concluding firmness toward the door. In another moment she had picked up her suitcase, and was gone! . . .

Parsons had not been able to glean one word or look of hope from the past swift moments, but he knew that, if the door once closed behind her, the girl would be lost to him forever. Lose her? Not by a most profane sight!

He was conscious of an inner frantic effort to gain control of a situation that appeared slipping from him like the heels of a skater who was balancing for dear life. But there was Mitzi, little Mitzi and her devilish cunning. Parsons wouldn’t have worded it that way, but those two counter elements kept sliding from beneath him while he clutched at equilibrium.

As the door closed behind the girl he was galvanized to action. He moved as if on springs. He jumped for his hat, his top-coat, his walking stick. He was struggling into his coat before Mitzi, occupied with the departure of the girl, thoroughly realized what was happening.

"Ve don't care—ve don' care, Parsons—let her go—let her go—" she cried vehemently, her high voice at concert pitch.

Parsons had grabbed his hat and stick.

"Great Heavens! Mitzi! We can't let her go out alone—" he returned excitedly—one expectant ear on the slamming of the lower outer door, the other, strategic, to the ground for any fleeting inspiration by which to reach the safe side of his *pons asinorum* and cinch the climactic moment.

He had his hand on the doorknob.

"But no—I von' let you go! Ve let her go, I say, Par-r-r-rsons!" Mitzi ejaculated, rolling her r's more than ever in her throbbing excitement, as she circled about him, and attempting to clog the wheels of progress by forcibly pulling his hand from the knob. "I von' let you go!"

Some men would have said, "You won't, won't you? The hell you won't!" and pushed her rudely out of the way. But not Parsons! He was the same Parsons-esque Parsons, even in the last gasps of extinction, turning to full account all the advantage which confusion lent the situation—

"My dear Mitzi—" (again the italics are Parsons's, not mine) "I am thinking *only* of you—do you *want* it said of you that you turned a young girl alone out of *your* house—into the streets—at *midnight*?"

He was standing at the open door now—on the threshold of fate—with Mitzi as its oracle. But his brain never flagged nor did his speech fail and—in another instant he was pounding down the stairs three-at-a-time, while from somewhere en route, unintelligible Parsons-isms were borne up to her skillfully disposed to heighten the ex-

citement of the moment and cover his getaway.

The god in Parsons had taken a chance.

## XI

MITZI, with a confused, puzzled look on her face, stood motionless until she heard the door below slam noisily.

She came back into the circle of light, crossed the shadows beyond it and slipped into the dusk of the window. Looking out, she saw Parsons striding across the street below, his stick at its accustomed jaunty angle.

Ahead of him was the girl, her slightness bending under the weight of her suitcase. Parsons hastened to overtake her. Mitzi saw him reach out his hand to take the suitcase, which the girl, with an angry gesture, jerked away from him.

Standing at one side of the window, hidden should either Parsons or the girl chance to look up, Mitzi strained her eyes that she might lose no detail of the climax of the drama staged for her against the snow-laden background of the Park. In the light of a passing trolley, she saw the pleading look in Parsons's face as he reached out his hand to detain her.

Mitzi dropped to her knees beside the window and raised the sash a few inches.

The snow, still falling in heavy enveloping flakes, deadened the usual street noises and muffled the sounds of the wheels of passing vehicles. Here and there through the silence she caught a word, an exclamation or a sentence as Parsons would raise his voice and gesture to explain, to demand, to plead, while the girl, her face drawn white and tense, stood in an almost defiant attitude—her face thrust forward and hand still clutching tightly the suitcase that Parsons sought from time to time to get possession of.

" . . . Surely you must understand . . . love you . . . you, dear, just you . . . Mitzi? Poof! ridiculous! . . . I *had* to square things someway . . . "

Mitzi's hand stole up and drew down the window. Her face shone a ghastly yellowish-white.

Under the lights of the Square she watched them as she rose from her knees. Parsons held out both arms in a final plea, and receiving no response, again sought to gain possession of the suitcase. . . . she saw the girl draw herself to her full height and make a gesture of denunciation with her free hand. Then Parsons stepped close to her as if to take her in his arms, but, like a flash, she thrust him back, and turning ran as fast as the bulk of the impeding suitcase would permit, leaving Parsons standing, mutely gazing after her. . . .

Mitzi turned, and with a suspicion of a backward glance at the figure of Parsons silhouetted against the whiteness of the Square, standing as one too stunned to move, she passed swiftly across the room and locked and bolted the door.

She came back into the circle of the

red lamp's light and stood in the silence of the big red room. The hard lines had reappeared about her mouth, but an amused, mysterious smile hovered about her lips.

"— *de distur-rb*—" she murmured softly.

The smile rose to her unreadable eyes as she picked up the telephone book. Its leaves fluttered under her hands. She stopped at the letter P, and ran a coarse forefinger slowly down the column: Par—Parslow—Parson—Parsons—D. Webster Parsons, Broker, 2 Wall Street, Broad 2385—D. Webster Parsons, residence 110 West End Avenue, Schuyler 593—

She lifted the telephone from the table and placed the receiver to her ear.

"— *de distur-rbing elemen'*—" she mused, seeming to hold the words with her teeth; "Centr-al—" she called, the soul of the East peering from behind her eyes, "please giff me *Schuyler fife—nine—t'ree*—".



## IN THE KEY OF B FLAT

By J. M. Lane

### I

**I** KNOW more of the customs of the Ancient Egyptians than any man alive.

I possess a priceless collection of prehistoric pottery.

My skill in reading hieroglyphics is considered marvelous.

Savants from all over the world flock to my receptions.

My ambitions have been fulfilled;

But I can never quite understand the wistful look in my young wife's eyes,  
As she gazes into the park,

Where boys and girls wander through the velvet shadows.

### II

Once upon a time, there was a man who had everything.

His smallest wish was gratified.

He never knew the meaning of disappointment.

When he was thirty, he shot himself.

Life bored him to extinction.



## INTENSIVE CULTIVATION

By Charles Divine

I HAVE a poor, statistical friend who, like so many men who devote their lives to mere figures and their compilation, has a sad cast of countenance. Yesterday I met him in Washington Square and he looked unusually plaintive.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "You seem glum."

"Well, statistics are supposed to be dry bits of recapitulation, you know," he said, "but I have just completed an exhaustive list which almost brings tears to my eyes.

"I have been living in this part of town for a year, you see, and during that time I have made statistics of all the fiction magazines that dealt with Washington Square. I found that in the thirty houses on the South side of the Square there have been in the last twelve months 27 murders, 31 suicides; 7,953 poets have been living in garrets; 135,246 artists have had studios and 135,246 have had love affairs; 9,346

sculptors have had 9,346 sylph-like young women knock at their doors on wild, dark nights, as preludes to great adventures; 10,553 writers have written successful stories, 10,551 doing so just when everything looked blackest for them.

"That's not the worst of it. I discovered that in the very house in which I live and in the very rooms I inhabit, there lives a writer to whom an editor has just sent a cheque for \$300 and into whose life has come a beautiful blonde with sea-green eyes. Now, I must be that writer, because I'm the only one living in those rooms!"

My statistical friend stopped and looked at me querulously, as if expecting help. I tried to think of something comforting to say to him.

"I'm sorry," I said.

"I don't mind the cheque so much," he complained, "but I would like to have the blonde."



AS the most thrilling thing one can very well do is to catch a pretty girl unawares and kiss her, so the least amusing is to catch and kiss her, and then realize that it was expected of one.



THE other man is always a cad. The other woman is always a cat.



# THE AMATEUR DANIEL

By Frank R. Adams

SYLVESTER GIRARD, the author of "How to Banish Fear," sat in his office awaiting with dread a threatened call from his landlord, who wanted either the pay for last January's rent or the possession of Mr. Girard's personal effects.

The sale of the volume "How to Banish Fear," published by the Girard Supply Company, had not yet reached any stupendous figure. It was still in its first edition, which was in imminent danger of being bought up by the rag man at a cent a pound. Neither was the Girard School of Self-Assertion doing a land-office business. There had been one pupil, but he had died of heart failure while running away from his own bulldog.

Mr. Girard, himself, the president and, at the time of this narrative, the faculty and janitor of the Girard School of Self Assertion, was a young man of smooth manners and convincing speech who should have been making an honest living selling corn salve and tinsel bricks to the farmers in Nebraska. He allowed his black hair to grow a little longer than that of his fellow men and he cultivated a resemblance to Daniel Webster or Henry Clay, he wasn't sure which, by wearing a frock coat and an impressive black Ascot tie.

"Rat-a-tat-tat," came a summons on the glass partitioned door.

Mr. Girard, although he had been expecting it momentarily, started slightly and considered the feasibility of not answering the rap. That course, however, would only stave off the trouble for a short time, and as there was no relief in sight, he decided he might as well get it over with.

"Come in," he invited, removing his feet from his desk and allowing his chair to tilt forward to a normal position.

The door opened timidly as if the visitor were not sure of a welcome. It could not be the landlord—he never cared whether he was welcome or not, seemed to find delight in coming when he was undesired, in fact. Sylvester Girard breathed a sigh of mingled relief and wonder. If not the landlord, who could it be?

One glance at the visitor who stepped across the threshold answered his question. It was a pupil! A bona fide, honest-to-goodness, hand-made, non-skid pupil!

He was a slender man of middle age, slightly bald on the top of his head, but sporting a luxuriant and droopy blond moustache on the upper lip. His eye was a mild and inoffensive blue. He stooped slightly in his walk as if accustomed to bear the burdens of life.

"Won't you be seated, Mr. —?" Sylvester Girard ended his sentence with an inquiring glance directed at his visitor.

"My name is Van Deusen, Peter Van Deusen," he replied. "You are Mr. Girard?"

Sylvester inclined his head. "I am, sir. What can I do for you?"

"I saw one of your advertisements some time ago," said Mr. Van Deusen, nervously fingering his hat, "and it occurs to me that possibly you might be able to help me to a little self-assertion, which I am almost convinced that I lack."

"Yes," said Sylvester Girard in his best professional tone. "Where do you



wish help particularly? Do you find difficulty in handling your office force, in dealing with social conditions, or does your problem lie in the home?"

Mr. Van Deusen sighed. "In the home," he repeated mournfully.

"Ah, yes. A very common form of diffidence. It afflicts a great many men, and I daresay the Girard School of Self Assertion has done more to put the heads of families into proper position, as master of the house, than any other single institution in the world." Mr. Girard grew oratorical as he concluded his speech and he said, "in the world" with a flourish as if talking to a Chautauqua audience.

"Just what is the situation at your home?"

Mr. Van Deusen shifted uneasily and looked over his shoulder expectantly, as if he thought that possibly someone had followed him. "I have been married nearly twelve years," he vouchsafed, "and I find that I have been gradually relegated to a subordinate position. I did not realize at first and I often gave in to my wife in the early days of our honeymoon as a matter of courtesy. To me, deference to her wishes was simply one of the kindly attentions which I felt it was her right to expect from me. Later she seemed to take it for granted that I would always acquiesce in her decisions and as a matter of fact I have found that it was impossible for me not to. I have gotten into a bad habit that I cannot overcome.

"There was no serious development for some time, but about six years ago she invited her mother to come and live with us, and although I viewed the idea with alarm I was not able to make an effectual protest. A year later a sister of hers, who was a spinster, joined our group because, as my wife said, she wanted to be near her mother. I pointed out that it was quite possible for her and her mother to be as near to each other as they liked in a separate home, but I failed to carry my point and in fact my existence was made so unbearable that I regretted having

stated my choice at all. There is no need of going into details. You can see what has happened and why I wish a change in my own home. My opinions are set aside as if I were a child with no voice in the management of the household. My position in the family is clearly defined. I take orders from any and all of Mrs. Van Deusen's family. If I dispute them in any way I am made to feel that I am an unreasonable brute."

"Ah, yes," Mr. Girard smacked his lips over the case as if it were a toothsome morsel. "Mr. Van Deusen, you are sadly in need of just the assistance that we can give you."

"I have contemplated coming to you for some time," Mr. Van Deusen said, "but, as you may imagine, I am obliged to attend very strictly to my business affairs in order to keep ahead of the expense of my large and rather extravagant family. By a lucky chance I have just recently closed a deal about which my wife is, as yet, ignorant, and I have some money which she does not know about. I have therefore come in to investigate your system."

That gave Sylvester Girard the ideal lead. He was at his best explaining things. Given an inexhaustible air supply, he could explain anything from Euclid down to twilight sleep. Having a first-hand acquaintance with facts was not necessary; his articulation depended only on muscular effort. His was a voice that would charm the shy and elusive gopher from his underground retreat and seduce the clinging dollar from the pocket of the village skinflint. On the subject of self assertion he had words that had hardly been used at all, and some ideas that were fairly squirming to greet the light of day.

"You wish to know something about the Girard School of Self Assertion," he began, "and what it can do for you. Briefly, sir, let me inform you that we can teach any person in full possession of his faculties how to overcome timidity of all sorts, how to have 'nerve,' how to deal with people, how to enter

a room, how to leave it without being thrown out, how to sell fireless cookers and vacuum cleaners, how to smoke a pipe in the parlor if you want to, how to look people in the eye, how to tell them what you want them to do and how to make them do it. Our motto is 'Poise, purpose, and power.'"

Peter Van Deusen's eyes lit with enthusiasm as he followed Mr. Girard's glowing forecast of what he could do with him. But at the end the fire died. Mr. Van Deusen was no fool and he had been in business too long to believe everything that a salesman says about his own goods. It was one thing to say that such things could be done and quite another to put them into effect, especially with Mrs. Van Deusen as an active opponent.

"That sounds very promising," the visitor admitted when Sylvester gave him a chance to put in a word, "but what evidence can you bring forth that what you say is true? Not that I doubt your word, sir, far from that, but it is customary nowadays to back up assertions with facts. I should be very glad to try out your system provided I could see any tangible and definite result that it has produced."

Sylvester paused for a moment. Apparently Mr. Van Deusen could not be drowned by any mere torrent of words. He had a craving for facts that language could not assuage. And he had money and was willing to pay for facts. Sylvester racked his brain for convincing arguments, and while he thought he talked. The two operations were independent of each other and could be conducted simultaneously without any apparent detriment to the quality of either.

"You want some proofs of the value of our system," he said, "some evidence that we do what we say we do? Very well, sir, you shall have them. What would you say if I told you that Theodore Roosevelt is a graduate of our school? He has the very qualities you desire, has he not? I mention his name to you in strictest confidence because, for political reasons, he does not

want to be mentioned in connection with our institution. He would be furious if he knew that I told anyone. I could go on multiplying instances of men in high places—"

"Isn't there anyone near at hand?" suggested Mr. Van Deusen, "some person in this city to whom I could go for a confidential interview about the merits of your teaching?"

"Hundreds of them, my dear sir, hundreds of them. I could—"

"Rat-a-tat-tat!"

Speech froze upon Sylvester's lips for the first time in his life. What a confounded shame! Just as he nearly had a pupil the fool landlord had to come for the rent. A dun for money would unquestionably scare away the wary but wealthy Mr. Van Deusen.

"Excuse me, Mr. Van Deusen, until I see who that is," Sylvester apologized, going toward the door and hoping that he could warn the invader to keep still. "My secretary has just gone out to order some stationery."

As he opened the door all hope of muffling the landlord vanished.

"I have come for the last time," said that individual loudly, shouldering through the door.

"So you have, so you have," interrupted Sylvester, with lightning rapidity, his strategic mind turning imminent defeat into possible victory. "Today I will give you your last lesson and give you a certificate of graduation from the Girard School of Self Assertion."

"What the—" began the landlord in bewilderment.

"It's lucky you came in just as you did. I want you to shake hands with Mr. Van Deusen, who is considering our course of study with a view to taking it up. Mr. Van Deusen, this is Mr. Parker, who is one of our pupils. You asked for some evidence as to what the Girard School could do for a man. I ask you to look at Mr. Parker. Two months ago he was afraid of his shadow, street car conductors made him pay his fare twice and he could not muster up the nerve to pro-

test, his wife bullied him, his business associates took advantage of him at every turn. But he has been coming to this office nearly every day for two months, haven't you, Mr. Parker?"

"Yes, and what's more—"

"He has been here every day and now look at him. He isn't afraid of anybody."

Indeed, no one could ask for a better example of aggressiveness than Mr. Parker. His nose was large, his moustache was bristly and his jaw was very unpleasant. His very watch chain was defiant as it looped gracefully in two loops from vest pocket to buttonhole and across a prominent "tummie" to the opposite pocket.

Mr. Van Deusen gazed at him in admiration. This was the kind of man he wanted to be.

"I'll take your course," he decided enthusiastically, pulling a roll of bills from his pocket. "How much are the lessons?"

Sylvester made a rapid estimate as to the amount of money Mr. Van Deusen held in his hand.

"Seventy-five dollars a month, payable in advance," he said at the conclusion of his computation.

Mr. Van Deusen paid the money, which left him four dollars in currency, which he might have gotten out of the office with if Mr. Girard had not thought to sell him a copy of "How to Banish Fear" for five dollars. Mr. Girard graciously allowed Mr. Van Deusen to owe him the other dollar until he came in for his first lesson the next day.

When the newly enrolled pupil had closed the office door behind him the president of the Girard School and Mr. Parker regarded one another silently for a moment or so until Mr. Van Deusen was out of earshot.

Then, "Come across," commanded the vulgar Mr. Parker briefly.

Mr. Girard started to peel off several bills. "How much will you take on account?" he asked tentatively.

"Don't bother to count it. I'll take it all. You can owe me that dollar

until to-morrow. I'll be waiting outside until he gets through with his lesson."

Sylvester regarded him with appraising eyes. Mr. Parker was certainly there with the self assertion. There seemed no way to compromise. He read unflinching determination in the other's glance.

"Oh, very well." He passed over the recently acquired fortune. "Won't you leave me enough for my lunch? I haven't a cent."

Mr. Parker was busy counting the bills. When he had strapped them around an already obese roll and put them in his pocket he replied, "Why, sure, I don't want to be too hard on a tenant. I'll stake you to lunch."

He dug down into his change pocket and fished up a handful of silver. "There you are." He flung a dime on Sylvester's desk with the prodigal air of a prince. "See you to-morrow."

Mr. Parker left, slamming the door noisily after him and whistling as he walked down the corridor to the elevator.

Mr. Van Deusen took a half hour lesson the very next afternoon. Professor Girard explained to him the correct way to stand and breathe when asserting oneself. It will not be ruining the business of the Girard School to explain the methods and theory of the introductory lesson.

"Stand firmly upon both feet and when you make an assertion bend slightly forward, and if possible take a step toward the person you are addressing. Never lean or step backward under any circumstances.

"Breathe deeply and do not expel all the air from the lungs at one gust when you make a statement. Keep a reserve.

"Clinch the hand firmly when you wish to be forceful. Some people are aided by taking a grip on some convenient object held in palm of the hand, such as a spool or a large-handled pocket knife.

"Above all, cultivate a steady eye. The ability to hold the glance of an

opponent without wavering is half the battle."

This last was the climax of Peter Van Deusen's first lesson. He had no difficulty in making a statement to his teacher with a steady gaze until Professor Girard suggested that he imagine that he was saying the same thing to his wife. Then, try as he would, Peter's eye would shift uneasily toward the door as if to locate an emergency exit.

"Say, 'Bring me my slippers,'" directed Sylvester. "And don't drop your eyes."

"Bring me my slippers," Peter repeated, but his voice trailed away to a mumble and his eyes fell.

"No, nothing like it," corrected Sylvester. "No one would ever obey a request like that. Now, try it again. Breathe deeply, step forward, clinch the hand and keep your eye steady."

Peter failed miserably.

"You'll have to have lots of practice on that part," sighed Sylvester.

"But how can I practice?" wailed Peter disconsolately. "I can't go around staring fixedly at my friends and advancing toward them with determination as I tell them to bring me my slippers."

"No, of course not. You must practice by yourself. When you leave my office go to Warner's Optical Goods Store around the corner and select a glass eye about the same shade as your wife's real one. When you are alone in your office you can place it on your desk and go over your lesson, keeping your glance on it steady. You can even practice, in subdued fashion of course, when you are on the street cars going to and from the office. You can hold the false eye in the hollow of your hand, out of sight of the other passengers, while you repeat your exercises over and over again until you get accustomed to saying those words without letting your glance stray from that objective point."

After working for two weeks Peter Van Deusen showed a marked improvement. He could tell that glass

eye to hurry up the breakfast, or find a missing collar button without flinching hardly any.

He wanted to try out his new determination at home and Professor Girard reluctantly agreed.

"Don't expect too much," he advised. "Attempt something simple at first."

"I thought of using the lesson about the slippers," Peter confessed modestly. "I've had more practice on that than anything else."

"All right," said Professor Girard. "But if you start anything be firm. Insist upon getting your way. Don't recede an inch. Giving in after taking a stand would be fatal."

"I won't give in," promised Peter. "I shall be firm. 'Poise, purpose and power' shall be my watchwords. Tonight I shall be the master of my home."

Sylvester waited rather anxiously for the hour to arrive for Mr. Van Deusen's next lesson and the following afternoon. The hour came, but not Mr. Van Deusen. Sylvester walked the floor with increasing agitation. He felt like a murderer. His perturbation was that of a general who stays behind and sends his beloved soldiers to certain death.

A second day passed without Peter, and Sylvester was mournfully considering taking his name off from the books.

The third afternoon, however, Mr. Van Deusen arrived. His blue eyes were watery and he wore a piece of red flannel around his throat.

"You're a fraud!" he whispered hoarsely as he stood in the doorway.

"What's the matter?" inquired Professor Girard anxiously, greeting him as a mother would a prodigal. "What happened? Did you give in?"

"No, I did not," asserted Peter, in so low a voice that the words could scarce be distinguished.

"Then what does this mean? Didn't you tell Mrs. Van Deusen to bring you your slippers?"

"I did, and I clinched my hands and breathed deeply and stepped toward

her, keeping my eye on her all the time. And I didn't give in. If I had I wouldn't have had to sit out on the stone front steps in the rain all night. I gave your system a fair trial and it failed. I want my money back."

That was manifestly out of the question. Besides being contrary to Sylvester Girard's ethical principles it was also physically impossible. You can't take something out of a place that is empty. So he cast about for the best way to deal with his refractory pupil.

"You must have done something wrong," he assured Peter. "My methods never fail. Of course, not having seen you do it, I can't say just where you made your mistake, but I know you did not carry out your instructions properly. I am so sure I am right that I am willing to bet you one thousand dollars in cash that if you do exactly as I tell you you will not fail."

Sylvester's thousand-dollar bet was not as reckless as it seemed. He could afford to lose it because one debt more or less didn't make any difference.

In Mr. Van Deusen's eye came a light of inspiration.

"I'll take you up," he said exultantly. "As soon as I get my voice back I'll try it again and you will know that I have followed instructions because you will be there to watch. If it works I will gladly give you a certified check for one thousand dollars on the spot."

Sylvester Girard entered into this compact with a doubting spirit. He had told Peter that he could do it, but in his heart were curious qualms. Could anybody do it? He had not seen Mrs. Van Deusen but he suspected that she was something out of the ordinary, not amenable to conventional conditions. Still he could not refuse a wager proposed by himself. If he lost he must leave the city suddenly. After all, there was little to keep him. He was sorry that the landlord had been paid. That seemed like a dead loss.

Peter Van Deusen's enthusiasm was in direct ratio to Sylvester's depression. He devoted himself assiduously to his

lessons and practice, even although he had not yet entirely recovered his voice.

At last he said, "To-morrow night we will make another trial."

Sylvester tried to plead another engagement, but it was unsuccessful. Mr. Van Deusen left him feeling a very blue and pessimistic professor. His career as an instructor in self assertion was drawing to a close. That is, of course, unless a miracle should happen. He sat in deep thought all the afternoon, wondering if it were possible for him to engineer such a miracle. If he could—! A thousand dollars would certainly come in handy.

The following evening Peter called at the office to take him out to his home. "I will introduce you simply as a friend," he said, "so that my wife will not suspect who you really are. I have telephoned her that I am bringing someone home to dinner so there will be no question about your welcome."

Before they entered the house Peter Van Deusen took the glass eye out of his pocket and addressed it firmly. "Bring me my slippers," he said, in a tone of voice calculated to exact obedience from a stone.

Slightly cheered by his rehearsal, he led the way inside.

Quite contrary to Sylvester's earlier picture of her, Mrs. Van Deusen proved to be a very pretty woman. Her face showed traces of a fiery temper which had been overindulged, but he decided mentally that if she were managed she would be a very good wife and he sighed with regret over the possibilities which had been so grossly neglected by Peter Van Deusen.

Besides Mrs. Van Deusen there was Mrs. Elliot, her mother, and Miss Elliot, her sister, who made up the party at the table.

A sense of something impending robbed Professor Girard of his usual buoyancy during the meal. He knew that his system was coming to a test in the immediate future and he feared it. After dinner the two men retired to Mr. Van Deusen's den to smoke.



"Now," said Mr. Van Dusen, "as soon as we get through with our cigars I will go out into the next room and spring it on her. I will leave the door open and stand in full sight of you sitting here so that you can see whether I do everything all right or not."

According to schedule Mr. Van Deussen left his guest in the dimly lit den and went out into the living room where the ladies were.

"Marion," he shouted in commanding tones.

"Yes, Peter."

"Bring me my slippers." Peter spoke firmly, clinching his hands as he did so and taking a step forward.

Sylvester Girard was half inclined to put his fingers in his ears and open his mouth as gunners do when there is about to be a discharge of artillery. Anyway he grabbed the arms of his chair as if he were expecting an explosion.

One, two, three, four—ten seconds passed. Nothing happened. The suspense was awful.

Then into the picture framed by the doorway came Mrs. Van Deussen, her head bowed. She knelt at the feet of her wondering husband and unlaced his shoes, which she replaced with comfortable slippers.

Peter Van Deussen was too startled to speak and he returned to the den stepping high, as if he were just missing a cloud every time, but in his eye was the look of an appeased tiger. You could see that he was smiling internally.

Without saying anything he reached in his pocket and fished out a check which he handed to Sylvester Girard.

"It was worth the money."

Sylvester looked at the check. It was for a thousand dollars and certified.

\* \* \*

The next morning Mrs. Peter Van Deussen received a note:

*My dear Mrs. Van Deussen:*

*Enclosed find five hundred dollars as per our agreement.*

(Signed) SYLVESTER GIRARD.

\* \* \*

That sounds like the end of the story, doesn't it, but it isn't. The following week Mrs. Elliot and her unmarried daughter left for a remote town in Canada, where they are going to settle in a home of their own. The household of Peter Van Deussen is now one of the most ideal, restful spots that you can ever expect to find. Sylvester Girard, a friend of the family, asked Mrs. Van Deussen once how it happened.

She smiled. "After getting his own way once," she explained, "it was impossible ever to stop him again. He got into the habit and there was nothing to do but to give in. I find I like it."

And the Girard School of Self Assertion has prospered beyond the wildest expectations of its president and founder, chiefly on the strength of the high recommendation given to it by Mr. Peter Van Deussen, one of its most prominent graduates.



A WOMAN'S first tear is a diamond, her second is a pearl, her third is—a tear.



A WOMAN'S husband is usually her first chance and second choice.



## A FALSE ALARM

By Barbara Tare

**B**OLT upright, every muscle tense, every nerve quivering, every atom of my being cold with the most soul-gripping terror I had ever experienced, I waited for a repetition of the noise that had wakened me.

But there was not a sound, it seemed utterly impossible for anything to penetrate the wall of blackness that enveloped me. The total absence of light or sound or movement of any kind simply added to the sense of complete disaster.

Suddenly, with intense grief, I remembered,—how absurd—it was only the last nail,—I was simply dead.



## SONG

By Robert Loveman

**O** LOVE, again 'tis April,  
I bring thee lilac bloom,  
That Flora wove in fragrance  
Upon a purple loom;  
The Winter through I sighed for you  
Again, and lo, the Spring,  
Within the solemn cedar trees  
Our birds are chattering.

The lilac bush is breathless  
With memories of you,  
The bees are ever murmuring  
Of some one loved and true;  
Haste, O my love, come thou to me,  
We'll tell the tender vows,  
And know again the old sweet hours,  
Beneath the lilac boughs.



**A**LL the really interesting women are married. The others are too busy trying to get married to be interesting.

## BREAD AND BUTTER

By Paul Hervey Fox

SOME time before that hollow period of life wherein a man addresses every associate under forty as "My boy," George discovered that he was a personal failure.

In things financial he had topped his fellows, for he had the gift of making money; and the plaster of paris of his manufacture outsold all competitors. But in the finer matters of friendship and love and laughter—if these be concerned with success in life—George was forced to confess that he had frankly missed out.

The truth was that the man was emotionally colorless. He had never been led into folly through excitement; he had never cause to recollect—with a shudder—painful blunders in his past; he had never permitted the moon to make an ass of him; he had never sat up till three with a crony, a pipe, and a bottle, attempting to classify his soul. And his small talk was invariably wretched.

The discovery that in the middle thirties his friends were only acquaintances and that he had not a single emotional experience in his whole memory came about mildly and quietly. In college he had known Peyton Strang, a wild and romantic youth whom many women loved. To Strang, George was as impossible as a monster in a fairytale. He would stare into that unruffled, practical face and splutter with delight like a biologist finding some new species. George, for his part, was merely a little bewildered at the other's exuberant, high-strung nature, and gravely complimented himself upon the serenity engendered by a matter-of-fact viewpoint. Why should anyone be de-

pressed one moment and overjoyed the next, revengeful this instant and magnanimous that? People (said George) were fundamentally alike. Life and living were on a dead level. One ate three meals a day, slept so many hours, rose at this particular stroke o' the clock, and plodded through a prescribed round of duties. Was there anything to grow excited over in such a scheme? And if it wasn't the universal manner of existence, what was?

At any rate, Strang had drifted out of his life, and George had got a tight hand on the collar of fortune before they met again. Then one day Strang wrote, revealing his presence in town, and the casual acquaintanceship was resumed. George found him married and comparatively settled, after a rackets life in several callings, as a painter of unblushing flatteries called portraits. But he was the same irrepressible, irresponsible Peyton Strang of old.

The sharp contrast threw George rather unexpectedly into the trick of analysis; he was, moreover, come to that age when a man examines his philosophy for the last time before he embalms it with final approval and lays it away in the tomb of his traditions. And then it was that George knew he had failed. Vaguely he felt that he had lost something, knowing that in the years allotted him he had garnered nor tears nor laughter. But so marked was the habit and temperament of the man that he could feel nothing save gentle regret at the emptiness of his existence. And in turn he could only gently regret that his reaction on awakening was only—gentle regret.

That first encounter with Strang after

long years stuck in his mind. He had gone by invitation to dine at the latter's apartment and meet his wife. Strang had swung open the door at his ring, the old, inevitable pipe in his mouth, the same attractive, self-confident grin on his lips, the eternal unchanged voice and rollicking air.

"Hullo, George!" he said with a kind of gay enthusiasm. "By God, I'm glad to see you!"

George put out his fingers and shook hands solemnly and with angular precision. "This is very pleasant, Peyton," he declared. "I'm glad to see you so well and happy."

Strang stared a little. Then he burst into laughter and clapped his visitor on the back with an alluring disregard of dignity. "Same old sobersides!" he announced. "Same old fellow, aren't you, George? . . . Here, let me help you off with your coat . . ."

Mrs. Strang was rather a surprise to the caller. In his straight-line way the practical man was something of a judge of character, and husband and wife struck him as a slightly incongruous pair. She was a handsome woman with the fine, aquiline nose of the hypersensitive type, but her eyes, very clear and cloud-grey in tone, held too much of humor in them, too much of good common-sense, ever to reflect Peyton Strang as an ideal.

During a pleasant dinner Strang talked in the buoyant fashion of his best mood. He was sentimental and ironic by turns, and told stories of himself with a deal of infectious laughter and not a little charm. The man was theatrical, insincere to his finger-tips, happy in creating an impression, an egotist with intelligence—and George, for the first time, was forced to feel an admiration which he privately resented.

Afterwards in that rosy hour of relaxation when chairs are secretly shoved back, legs thrust invisibly forward, and the air is thick with cigar-smoke and self-satisfaction, the talk fell, as was foreordained, upon marriage.

"Can't figure why you never married,

George," Strang remarked idly. "You were a family man from birth."

"Perhaps it's just as well," George answered with a slow smile. "If I had married, my wife would have probably run off after a year of me with some romantic individual like yourself." It was one of the longest speeches he had ever made on any subject not connected with facts.

Mrs. Strang gave a sudden, if subdued, exclamation, and pressed her serviette to her lips.

Strang turned an amused face in her direction. "What's the matter, dear?" he questioned. "Did George's remark stir up the suspicion that I've a previous record as a home-breaker?"

"Perhaps that was it," she answered in her cool, even voice, the faintest tinge of mirth in the corners of her eyes.

Strang leapt to his feet. "Come to think of it," he exclaimed, "I haven't made love to you for a fortnight! Let's go into the living room and I'll play you something, and sing, too, if George will let me."

They rose, Strang swinging in behind his wife with his loping, affected stride, George following with his slow, definite steps. Nothing save the face is as revealing of a man's personality as his gait.

Strang removed his cigar, and seating himself at the piano began to play, his long arms stretched out before him, his head thrown back.

*The night lay dark on the dusky lane,  
When I rode by, when I rode by,*

he sang in an agreeable, well-modulated voice. His wife, her chin in one hand, leaned forward slightly, watching him. George wondered what message lay behind those luminous eyes. Not that he was particularly interested in learning, for to him it was merely an excellent way of diverting his attention from the music.

Suddenly Strang jumped up, his face flushed with gayety and good humor, and throwing an arm about his wife's

shoulders, pressed his lips to her hair. And then, as if to cover a slightly awkward situation, all three broke into forced laughter.

Strang retreated to the piano. "I'll play you something I'm responsible for now, George. A little song of Venice. Ever been in Venice?"

"No. I haven't been abroad."

"Ah, man, you've got to go! The big moon gleaming on the water, and the soft, balmy air, and the lights, and—oh, I can't touch the thing to life for you!"

"It must be very pretty," said George politely. "I went to the Bermudas once, but I didn't like the crowd of tourists. Nobody seemed to have any business."

He looked up to find Mrs. Strang regarding him in a curious way.

"I agree with you, I think," she said after a pause, rather as if for the sake of saying something. She turned to her husband. "Speaking of the Bermudas, did you ever hear from Mrs. Taunton again, Peyton?"

"Mrs. Taunton? Mrs. . . . the woman who called my picture a . . . Oh, Claudia, Claudia, how could you recall the thing! Now you've broken up the evening for me? You've smashed things, you've—oh, I'm not reproaching you. I know you didn't mean it. But I'm sensitive to matters like that. I can't go on. I—"

Peyton Strang slouched from the piano stool into an easy chair, and dropped his head forward in his hands. There was a space of silence.

To George the thing was nothing unexpected. In the old days he had seen Strang shift so often from one violent mood into its extreme without the briefest hiatus, that he would have been a bit surprised if something of the sort had not occurred before the evening was over. But he thought there was a rather cruel light in Mrs. Strang's eyes when she murmured, "There's nothing like a little temperament, now and then, is there?"

George rose. He knew that Peyton would not open his mouth for the rest of the evening, and he reckoned he

would be wise to depart promptly. Accordingly he made his excuses and ignored Mrs. Strang's invitation to remain longer. His last impression was a picture of Strang hunched up in his chair, a symbol of silent depression. Once outside, however, George proceeded to focus his attention on the far more exciting matter of the possibility of rain . . .

For all that he took things so calmly, he confessed to an admiration for Mrs. Strang, and in the two or three months that followed he managed to see a good deal of his old friend's wife. The quiet cleverness of the woman, the knife-like quality of her perceptions attracted him immensely; had he been younger George might actually have compassed an emotion at last, and the supreme one at that. The curious thing about their relationship was that the woman never seemed bored by him. That Strang was very much in love with her was clear; and that she was equally in love with Strang he took as a foregone conclusion, though he set her down as undemonstrative. Popular plays and novels had taught him that Strang was the sort of man for whom women "left their homes."

No wonder, then, that it seemed a little surprising that Mrs. Strang and George should get along so well together, for, as has been said, he was a bad hand at minor conversation.

He gravely discussed the making and manifold uses of plaster of Paris with her, explained the mechanism of various firearms with an abundance of technical terms, and never, under any circumstances, strayed from cold facts and material matters. It was about this time, perhaps, that he woke to a realization of his own deficiency, woke to a comprehension of the intrinsic worth of frivolous things. He wished now that he had cultivated an ability for pretty speeches, wished that he was able to stroll in the moonlight and exchange confidences, however banal. But when occasion offered, the words stuck in his throat; he couldn't feel them, and there came forth nothing but bundles of sta-



tistics and honest-to-God truths about steel and asphalt and the beef-trust and the tariff. There was no nonsense in poor George!

As time crept on he grew fonder of Claudia Strang. He and she seemed to have some secret in common, some private, sympathetic understanding. Often when Peyton was play-acting at his best she would glance over her husband's shoulder and meet George's surprised eyes with a smile that defied analysis. George began to see that she liked him not a little, and presently, queer as it may seem, the man summed up his pleased vanity and the comfort he took in her presence as nothing less than love.

One afternoon, as he sat idly in his office, the 'phone rang and when he lifted the receiver from the hook, he heard her voice on the wire.

It appeared that she wanted him to drop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

"I'd like to very much," said George. "I haven't seen either you or Peyton for a week."

"Oh, he won't be here," squeaked the telephone diaphragm, and immediately thereafter, with a curious quickness, came the click of the broken connection.

George hung up the receiver. From his face you might have fancied he had just ordered a dozen lead-pencils. Despite a very real subtlety in him, a situation in which he participated somehow always took on the color of his own prosy dullness.

He made his way up town and found Mrs. Strang—far too attractively gowned—in the living room of her apartment. Despite the fact that Peyton was a professional artist the place was furnished with a very fair taste. Heavy draperies and dark paper suffused the room with soft shadows so that the glass tray of the mahogany tea-wagon showed like ebony streaked with silver. An electrolier burdened with a great shade of yellow silk cast a faint radiance on rugs and walls.

Yet George entered as one might step into a subway. To him atmosphere had only one synonym: air.

He shook hands and sat down and for a moment they spoke briefly of the weather and the newspaper topic of the hour. Then the woman leaned forward.

"I suppose you wonder why I asked you to come up to-day?" she said.

George shook his head. "Why, I guessed you just wanted someone to talk to and kill time with," he answered.

She looked at him approvingly. "You're the only man I've ever met who could resist making ridiculous speeches if he saw an opening."

"Is that so?" said George with courteous interest.

"Sometimes," she went on, "you baffle me with your straightforwardness, your common-sense. I'm so accustomed to living up to the romantic demands of most men that I don't know how to act when I meet a sincere one."

For want of anything to say George smiled faintly.

The next moment she put her hand out and laid it on his arm. "George, I've known you only a few months, but I've learned to like you—a great deal—in that time. You're different, you're — Do you like me?"

George ran his finger around the inside of his collar. In him the act was practically equivalent to hysteria in another. "Yes, indeed!" he responded. "But," he added with a smirk of modesty, "after Peyton I don't see how you can be interested in my type, Claudia."

"That's just why I am interested!" she told him. "Oh, Peyton! Peyton! Honestly now, if you were in my place how would you like to live with a man who gnashed his teeth with assumed jealousy every time my brother-in-law calls with his wife; a man who writes love songs to me until I want to scream; a man who praises everything he eats so that I don't know what he does like; a man who makes compliments every five minutes and tries to kiss me at least three times a day; a man who has a mood for each hour and who never knows what he's going to do next?"

George grinned a little uneasily. "No, of course, I—but a woman's different."

"You mean she thinks she is. When I married Peyton I thought I'd done something. The honeymoon was splendid. But when Peyton insisted on declaring his deep affection for me at luncheon for the next three years I grew rather—well, rather tired."

"Well, well," said George, "I always thought a romantic man fascinated a woman."

"Not as a husband," declared Mrs. Strang. "There's a time and place for love, but it certainly isn't in marriage!"

It was near twilight now, and the small room seemed to grow even darker. The figures of the man and the woman sitting there seemed more indistinct, but the glow of light set half of Mrs. Strang's face into clear relief, the shapely features tinged with the bronze reflection, the eyes bright with some hidden exhilaration.

Suddenly she bent nearer and her voice became soft and ardent. "Can't you see why I'm saying this? . . . Don't you understand why I'm telling you everything? . . . I want you . . . I want you, George! Won't you take me away from here? Anywhere, only away! I can't live longer in this unreal atmosphere, and if I just ran off Peyton would probably follow me and try to win me back and make love to me all the more. . . . And, oh, George, George, I do like you so! I can't live on caviar alone. I've got to have bread and butter!" And then she put her head on George's shoulder and kissed herself with his mouth. At least it seemed that way, for the practical man appeared to have small part in the transaction.

He held her there for a moment and thought with the clear-headedness that had won him his fortune. He was not at all excited, though he was actually a little embarrassed. It dawned upon him that here was a situation for which he had gently sighed, and though he did not at all enjoy playing black to Peyton Strang's white, yet the opportunity, he felt, ought not to be missed. It was his duty to be reckless at least

once in his life, and he had never, never, never neglected his duty!

He raised Claudia Strang like an expressman lifting a trunk, and stood up himself.

"I suggest, my dear," he said, "that we leave by the morning train for Canada. I will go to my house and have my baggage packed. Then I'll call you to-morrow morning and let you know the time of the train. We'll meet in the station after Peyton has gone to his studio."

She looked at him a little unsteadily. "You're not doing this just to befriend me, George? I've watched you this last month and I did think you—you liked me. You do care for me, George, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, indeed!" George answered. "Very much, I assure you! . . . By the way, have you any idea what the fare to Canada is? Maybe I have enough with me to stop in and get the tickets on my way home."

Over the face of Claudia Strang crept a curious change. "Most of the men I've known," she cried, "have been overstocked with sentimentality, but you—you haven't a grain of romance in your whole make-up!" For a moment she stared at him with wide, immobile eyes, and then, to George's amazement, she dropped into the nearest chair and screamed with uncontrollable laughter.

George gazed at her in perplexity until at length a solution dawned upon him. "I'm afraid this is a rather trying situation," he said after a moment. "If I were you I should retire early and get plenty of sleep. And you'd better send your maid to the nearest druggist's for some Plantagenet Pills. They're very soothing to the nerves, I understand. Good-by, dear, I'll see you in the morning."

He was followed to the door by her wild, hysterical laughter.

That evening he was very busy with his preparations. He called up the station for reservations, and with the assistance of his housekeeper packed a small steamer-trunk. In the morning,

he had decided, he would 'phone to his manager to take the responsibility at the office during his absence.

When he awoke he saw that he had overslept a little—and on this day of all days! His personal mail was lying on the small table by his bed and a night letter figured prominently in the pile. He tore it open and read:

*I shan't be at the station. I'm afraid just bread and butter alone is as impossible as a diet as caviar. Besides I'm afraid, George, that there's plaster of Paris in the bread.*

CLAUDIA STRANG.

George read it over just once and he

did not look at all like a player in a film. The brown slip of paper did not flutter from his nerveless fingers. He did not stare with haggard eyes into the distance and clench and unclench his fists. In fact, he did nothing at all save collect his clothing from the chair and start drawing on a sock.

"I'll have to cancel those reservations," he mused half-aloud. "And that trunk's got to be unpacked. Too bad!" Suddenly he cast a glance at the clock on the mantel. "Dear me! I shall be late in the office this morning, if I don't hurry! Mustn't set a bad example to the clerks . . ."



## HOW HAVE I BEEN DELUDED

By Harry Kemp

HOW have I been deluded  
And broken in my pride  
By eyes that falsely looked the truth,  
By wanton lips that lied!

How have I been deluded  
By kisses in the night!  
How many a full blown rose I've missed  
By blossom-plucked delight!

By women, by women  
How have I been betrayed!  
(And how I fear God's lightning yet  
For the lies I, too, have made.)



STUPID people are always refreshing. They are so delightfully ignorant about what they don't know.



A WOMAN who knows how to smile is as the man who knows when to leave.



# THE HOMECOMERS

By Donal Hamilton Haines

THE streets were full of people and dust and noise. From the upper floors of buildings, flags and strips of bunting drooped in the windless air of late August. At the corner of Main and Bridge streets, where the crowds were thickest and the gongs of the trolley-cars sounded loudest, a pretty arch of lath and canvas spanned the pavement. A brass band somewhere was banging out Sousa and everyone was whistling. It was half-past four in the afternoon.

Robert Sharpless came out of the bank building and stood on the inner edge of the sidewalk. He was a tall, fair young man with blue eyes and a queer face. It was queer because when he had on his glasses he had the look of a student, but when they were off the student vanished and he looked like an athlete. He wore a gray suit, and to the lapel of his coat was pinned a white badge on which the word "Reception" was printed in blue letters.

He stood for a few moments looking at the crowd with an incurious eye and fingering nervously the badge in his buttonhole. Then he crossed the sidewalk, elbowing his way with good-natured insistence through the steady stream of people, and climbed into a gray automobile which was parked in the tight-wedged row of machines at the curb.

It was perfectly evident that Sharpless was running away from something, and that his conscience was uneasy. He kept his eyes on the dashboard while he started his motor, and backed out into the street with almost reckless haste.

He dodged through the crowded traffic, waited in a fret during the passage of a braying blue-and-scarlet band, then sped up Main Street.

"I'm sick of it!" he exclaimed. "And what's more, I'm going to chuck the whole business!"

Once the decision was made and announced, the man's whole manner underwent a change. He took the badge from his coat and flung it into the street, removed his hat, stuck an empty pipe between his teeth and slouched down in his seat. Whatever had been pricking his conscience had ceased to prick. He drove out Main Street into the open country. Behind him bands blared and ribboned committees gathered with fluttering nervousness, but his mind was closed to them.

Robert Sharpless, one of Black Hill's most promising young lawyers, was running away!

It was the thing from which he fled which measured the degree of his folly and the depth of the subsequent and inevitable disgrace. He had deliberately turned his back upon an event of the utmost importance in Black Hill's history—an event, moreover, in which he had been scheduled to play a part of considerable prominence.

Basil Rand, with his family and all his millions, was coming to Black Hill—to stay!

The entire country was familiar with the name of Basil Rand, his princely fortune, his myriad activities. But few knew that he had been born in the square brick house on top of the pine-clad ridge which gave Black Hill its name, and that in the days before fame caught him up he had stood,

aproned and obsequious, a grocer's clerk in the sprawling town.

At the splendor of this return of the giant to his native heath the little city had caught its breath. The thing was far staggering! It affected all classes, all walks of life. Industrial Black Hill buzzed with pleasant speculations as to just how Basil would invest his spare millions; social Black Hill murmured and palpitated at the thought of the brilliant functions to be initiated by the arrival of Basil's wife and daughter. The Commercial Club saw in the coming of the great man an infinitely surer fixing of their city upon the commercial map than could be accomplished by the erection of seductive billboards, or the wide dissemination of boom literature.

So, on this smoky, end-of-summer August day, Black Hill had prepared to give Basil a fit welcome. He was to be met at the station by bands and committees, and escorted in state to the Hotland House and the inevitable banquet. Then Basil would speak to all the city from a flag-decked platform in the Park, after which he would join his ladies at the Country Club, where they had been entertained since their arrival, and where a dance would put an appropriate close to the festivities.

And in all this, Robert Sharpless was to have had his part. He was to have been one of the reception committee at the station, to have responded to a toast at the banquet, and to have occupied a seat on the platform in the park—it had even been planned that his should be among the fortunate initials to grace Mary Rand's dance program! Yet he had turned his back upon everything, and was riding into the country with untroubled eyes on the road in front of him.

It had been no freak of mood, no whim of the moment that had made him bolt, nor had he gone about the business blindly. He knew what people might say, knew that he had deliberately entered himself upon the black books of the Rands' displeasure, and

that he had done nothing for his growing practice. Yet it was precisely because he had a conscience and not because he was without one that he had run away.

During all the flurried days of preparation, he had been increasingly conscious that his attitude toward the return of Basil Rand was one of smouldering hostility. He did not know what the man looked like, nor anything about him. But this did not matter. Basil Rand would do to Black Hill those very things which Sharpless had hoped might never come to pass.

He cared a good deal for the little city which clung to the slopes of the ridge. He had been born there; he had never thought of fitting himself into any other scheme of life. Black Hill, however, was changing from the community Sharpless had known and loved, and the change went deeper than the erection of ten-story buildings and the development of traction lines. Its simplicity was vanishing. Its people worked and played differently. This went against the grain with Sharpless. He had no patience with the aping of larger cities. In his opinion, Black Hill had fulfilled its destiny, but, instead of being content to enjoy it, must needs be reaching out for new things.

And now, under the impulse of the Rand name and the Rand millions, the waning days of Black Hill's simplicity would be abruptly cut off. Sharpless's imagination had already supplied the details of the picture that was in the making: plodding industries suddenly puffed to pouter-pigeon proportions, the two old-fashioned newspapers made the subsidized organs of the Rand policies, the subtle influence of the millionaire invading the most intimate cracks and crannies of life!

"If the old boy were a feudal baron," Sharpless muttered as he swung out of the main road into a narrower one bordered by scrub oak, "I wouldn't resent him so much. But there's nothing feudal about the whole silly performance. We'll ape him out of sheer envy of things we really don't want and can't



afford—and that's a rotten philosophy!"

He bit hard on the stem of his pipe and scowled at a king-bird teetering saucily on a telegraph wire. The consciousness of the figure he was bound to cut had caused the sudden tightening of his jaws. The knowledge that he was acting with the courage of his convictions was very comforting, but it did not make one whit less unpleasant the unfortunate by-products of that process. He would have to maintain a difficult silence concerning this evening's disappearance, or make explanations which would be still more difficult. And either way, his chances of dipping a modest finger into the legal affairs of Basil Rand (a thought which was at the back of every lawyer's brain in Black Hill) were shattered.

"People," he told the king-bird, "will call me unpleasant names or let me severely alone. I don't like the one, and I can't afford the other. I can choose between watching my practice dwindle and leaving Black Hill."

He glanced at his watch. It was a quarter of six. In less than two hours the great Basil would be doffing his hat in response to the shouts of people who wouldn't be quite clear as to why they were shouting. Sharpless replaced his watch with a grin.

"I'm glad I did it!" he decided. "I'll sleep the better for it!" Then his thoughts veered away from his own affairs, a sure sign that his soul was at peace. "What gets me is what made the old chap come back here anyhow! Must be just an inordinate desire to have his back scratched."

For a time he drove lazily, slumped down in his seat, watching the softening of outlines under the red rays of the dropping August sun. Then he sent the gray car boring through the waning light by unfrequented roads until he reached the edge of a dreary stretch of marsh. Here he sat smoking placidly until his vigil was rewarded by the whistling arrival of a flock of mallards, who slid down over him with a rush of bowed wings. He saluted them with waving cap and a boyish shout.

"What do you and I care for Basil Rand and his follies?" he cried. Then he started his engine and knocked out his pipe against the fender. "I shall drive to Waller for supper," he decided, "then loaf about the country until the last scrap of red-fire is ashes and old Basil has been safely put to bed!"

Waller was a tiny hamlet with a single hotel, the excellence of whose meals was known only to a few. Sharpless drove toward it slowly, with the deliberation of one who appreciates the charm of deserted roads and fields in the gray of early evening. Darkness overtook him near Drake's Crossing, five miles from his destination. Ahead of him a twisted serpent of light came roaring across the fields.

"The monarch's train!" he chuckled.

To his surprise, the train stopped at the crossing, stood for a few seconds, puffing and uneasy beside the little station, then, with a derisive whoop of its whistle and a hiss of air, went surging off toward the city.

As his machine bumped over the rails a few minutes later, Sharpless was aware of a twinkling lantern and a group of shadowy figures beside the tracks, then a man's voice hailed him.

"Goin' to the city?"

"Well, yes," Sharpless admitted grudgingly, not at all pleased at the prospect of giving up his dinner at Waller.

"These here folks," continued the voice, "want to get there."

Sharpless sighed and did the obvious thing.

"Glad to give you a lift," he called, opening the door as he spoke.

The shadowy figures resolved themselves into two: a lean, elderly man in an old-fashioned linen-duster and a young woman in a traveling coat which couldn't hide her figure, and a veil which did hide her face.

"This is mighty good of you," the elderly man said as he helped his companion into the car and climbed in behind her, "but if you knew what a pair of simpletons we are, I doubt that you'd carry us."

"How's that?"

"Well, sir, you may believe it or not! We were on that train. It stopped. We got off to stretch our legs—and, by George, it left us!"

"And the prospect of staying there all night," added the woman, "was not attractive."

"I assure you the reality is worse," chuckled Sharpless. "I've stayed there. Then I imagine you're in rather a hurry to reach Black Hill?"

There was an instant of hesitation on the part of the occupants of the rear seat, and when the woman answered, it was in a voice which seemed very close to laughter.

"Not in the least!" she exclaimed hastily.

"You see," explained her companion with some hesitation, "there's some sort of a jollification going on in the city to-night, and neither of us cares at all for that sort of thing. So we'd just as leave miss as much of the racket as suits you."

Sharpless threw back his head and laughed.

"That's funny," he said. "I'm running away from that same jollification myself!"

"You're what?" The question came in chorus.

"Why," explained Sharpless, "Black Hill is opening its arms to a famous son who's coming back to spoil the town with a barrel of money and camp there to the end of his days. I'm on the reception committee. But I ran! Black Hill doesn't need a millionaire. He'll spoil it. And I wasn't going down there and listen to the chap spout platitudes and pretend I was glad to see him."

There was an instant of silence, then an explosion of laughter.

"Oh, dad!" gasped the girl, "didn't I tell you it was perfectly hopeless? You spent oodles of money to have that train stopped, but they've sent a piece of the reception committee out into the wilderness and caught us! No, I will not 'ssshhh!'—and if Mr. Reception Committee doesn't stop the car

and let me really laugh, I shall die!"

Sharpless stopped the car.

"Yes," said the man in the linen-duster, "I am Basil Rand, and this is my shameless daughter Mary—and we're running away too!"

The lawyer sat stiff and speechless with astonishment.

"I lost my nerve," Rand went on, "I've been losing it ever since your Commercial Club told me they were going to make a fuss over my coming home, and I let 'em do it. Don't know why I ever told 'em to go on with such nonsense; it isn't my sort of thing at all.

"All the way east from Denver, I've been losing my nerve. I can't make speeches. I can't strut! Mrs. Rand was so sure I'd do the wrong thing that she stopped off to visit some people in Chicago. And finally I just bribed the conductor to stop the train, and Mary and I climbed off!"

"And, of course," added Mary, "we're thoroughly ashamed of ourselves, and entirely in your hands. What are you going to do with us?"

"You've got the making of my reputation in your hands, young man!" the millionaire reminded him.

"And my own as well," answered Sharpless. "I'm going to drive you straight to the city. You'll be too late for the parade and the banquet, but you can make your speech in the Park."

Basil Rand threw up his hands.

"But what will I say?" he demanded helplessly while his daughter giggled unfeelingly.

"Why, just tell them the real reason for all this," said Sharpless. "I think I've guessed it."

"I'll do it!" Rand said shortly.

During the drive to the city, the conversation lay between Sharpless and Mary Rand. Old Basil sat curled up in the corner of the back seat, chewing an unlighted cigar.

It was a noisy, excited and restless Black Hill into which Sharpless drove the gray car. Bands played here and there, the streets were full of people, and machines, full of anxious-looking

men in evening dress, darted madly this way and that.

"Dad, just see what we've done!" ejaculated Mary.

Sharpless drove straight to the office of the *Black Hill Republican*. He found Bert Shandrew, the managing editor, surrounded by vociferous committeemen, tearing his hair and sending telegrams by the gross.

"What's happened?" demanded Sharpless.

They glared at him, then crackled into excited and profane speech. He stopped them.

"Yes, I know all that. But where are you? Had the banquet?"

They had, they admitted, had a lean banquet without the guest. They were raking the country for trace of Basil Rand, who had been swallowed up by the night. He had been on the express at Chicago. His baggage had reached Black Hill—

"You get the mayor and a band to the Park as soon as you can," Sharpless cut in. "I've got Basil Rand outside in my car!"

"What!!!"

He beat them off and fairly fought his way to the door.

"You do what I say!" he shouted as he fled.

They had to elbow their way through a crowd that filled the park to get Basil to the speakers' stand. Preliminaries were cut short; the people were tired. The mayor was commendably brief, and Basil Rand stepped to the railing.

It was not the sort of a figure that Black Hill had expected. A tall, spare man in loose-fitting clothes, with a brown, smooth-shaven, deeply lined face, and a pair of keen eyes under a thatch of snow-white hair. He put his hands on the railing, leaned forward and began to talk.

"This is all wrong. There's no reason for all this splurge. A man's come back home—that's all. If I thought all you folks were out here just because you were glad to see me, I'd be mighty proud. But that's not it. I'm a million-

aire—that's what you've come to see! I'm sorry, because I'm going to disappoint you.

"You see, I haven't brought any Sunday paper trappings to Black Hill. I've only got one car, and that's a last year's model. And very few of my family's clothes come from Paris. I'm not going to build a new house nor half a dozen new factories. I didn't bring my business with me either. The only reason I'm in Black Hill to-night is because I wanted to live in a place where I could mow my own lawn in my shirt-sleeves and talk across the fence with the man that lives next door. If you've gone to work and spoiled this town for such things since I've been gone, I'll move away next week and we'll all be glad of it.

"I pretty near missed this show! I jumped off the train a few miles out because I was afraid to face all this music. One of your young men found me. He'd run away too. He was just as scared of me as I was of the town. So we both came back to see if we couldn't square ourselves with you folks.

"I hope I haven't spoiled things. They tell me I'm expected to go out to the country club after this. I don't want to. I want to go home and go to bed. I've had men busy for weeks getting the house in shape, and I've spent the last twenty-eight hours in Pullmans! I wish my family and I could whoop things up a bit for you, if that's what you've been waiting for, but I'm afraid we can't. All we can do is to be just plain folks together. I'm mighty glad I'm here, and I hope you are!"

Then Basil climbed down from the platform and started off through the crowd. He waved aside all protests.

"No," he said, "I'll put up a dozen new cups for the country club, but I don't go out there to-night. But I guess maybe I can persuade Sharpless here to drive out the rest of my family—eh?"

Sharpless was already cranking his Buick.

# THE MARIONETTES

By John McClure

SHE is a slip of a thing with mighty dreams. She would surpass people, overtopping the world. She would hear in her ears always, like dulcimers, the music of praise. She is a slip of a thing with brown eyes.

In her dreams she rides in a chariot, silver-wheeled, over incompetent folk.—*Vae victis!*

She is brown-eyed and wistful.

And I—I take pleasure in lampooning her until she weeps hot tears at the vanity of it. . . . I take pleasure in stabbing her with dry laughter till she is wretched and sad.

She is a slip of a thing with brown eyes.

Perhaps it is because I might love her that I make her suffer so. . . . Perhaps. . . . But I fear it is the old devil in me, chuckling as heretofore. . . .

I preach to her. . . . Homilies . . . as if I were not petty as she.

It is like a puppet show. I preach to her, I who do nothing all my life long save teethe an old pipe, chattering sparrow-wise. It is a pretty show of marionettes. (I wonder who is pulling the strings?)

I preach to her, as if I were not petty as she, nodding my head like a mandarin, while she drops her eyes like a doll.



# THE VULGAR ONE

By John W. Draper

DREADFULLY callous to the finer things,

But still a pleasant fellow just the same—

A little rough, but then—*que voulez-vous?*

He always calls the servants "Bill" and "Jim";

He laughs a bit too loud, and eats too much—

(What vulgar people do have appetites!)

He has no secrets from the world at large—

At least not from the trolley nor the street

Where he may hold his converse for the nonce;

And oh, the poor dear English of the King!

He plays the very Lord High Torturer

With every straying verb or noun he finds

Out of the regular run of "Yes" or "No,"

"At home," "Go out," or such-like common stuff;

And such a taste in art!—'tis like the words

In which he phrases it. I tire of him—

Let's talk of someone else; one should not say

Anything detrimental about one's father.

## A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

By Ernest Howard Culbertson

LIONEL ARROWSMITH, author of a dozen of the very "best sellers," and Freddy Decker, his youthful protégé, reclined in large leather chairs before one of the broad windows of the hotel lounge. Freddy's clear blue eyes were fixed upon his mentor in eager, impatient inquiry.

He had just broached a very important matter—fraught with sacred revelation—to Lionel and the latter had manifested a blighting disinclination to discuss it, save in the most casual and reserved manner. In fact the great author had manifested an obstinate disposition to change the subject, and the boy had been put to the most manifold exertions to keep him to it.

Freddy was very specifically in love with Paula Danforth—or thought he was—and was ardently desirous of experiencing and cherishing each specific mood attendant thereto in its most vivified and unalloyed form. Directed conversation seemed to be the best means of accomplishing this. He wanted to discuss it, he would discuss it!—anything and everything which promised a remote possibility of throwing into bolder relief the lustrous image of the adorable one or of intensifying the exalted mood which now ravished him.

Freddy was young, very young, and had the delicate, attenuated features of a poet—a broad, sloping forehead, which, if its elevation had been slightly greater, might have been an adequate concomitant of the features, and instead of being a very bright and promising young man in the foreign exchange department of a large bank, he might have immortalized himself by writing incomparable verse. By such

anatomical perversities does Fate justify the anathemas that have been hurled at it by red-blooded individuals from time immemorial—beginning, I fancy, when the first cave-lady gazed into a pool of water and discovered that pulchritudinously she was not what she might have been.

Freddy, however, despite the unwonted drawback, had been moved lately to perpetrate some sonnets, sonnets pulsing with erotic fervor—but they pulsed, and that was all; they were very bad indeed.

Lionel was now momentarily engaged in surveying the hurrying throngs on the pavement below with the languid, sardonic detachment of one thoroughly bored by the drama of human existence. He was tall and pale and ascetic in appearance, with large, gray, melancholy eyes; always there was a sub-current of egotism in everything he said; he was oracular and authoritative, and upon occasions blatantly assertive; he conducted himself generally with an air of mildly ironic sophistication. He was about thirty-six or seven. Presently he turned and regarded the boy through a mist of rising cigarette smoke.

"You're engaged to her, you say?" he queried wearily.

"Yes—practically," responded Freddy. "I haven't got the ring yet, though."

"I judge your courtship has been quite romantic," said Lionel.

"Well—we haven't exactly exceeded the speed limit,—but I haven't any kick coming," replied Freddy. "Believe me, Lionel," he continued with enthusiasm, "she's a wonder! A perfect wonder!"

"I daresay," mused the great author with a thin, satirical smile.

"I've done some traveling in my time, and I've seen some great little queens, but I've yet to put my eyes on one that can hold a candle to her!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Lionel indulgently.

"She's so different—so absolutely different from any girl I've ever known." He allowed his gaze to wander dreamily out of the window. "She's so clever and has so many charming little ways. She'd make a corking heroine for one of your stories!" he declared at length.

"I shouldn't wonder!" responded Lionel pensively, as though pondering the glittering possibilities of the suggestion. "Marriage—um—" he continued eventually, "it's rather hazardous experiment for a chap with your sensitive nature and vivid imagination."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Freddy, squirming some with annoyance. "I'm willing to take a chance. I know I do feel a little more keenly than most chaps—but this kid is going to help me to feel the way I want to—all the time. She has such sympathy and understanding—she's so soothing. She's just like a cool breeze off the bay on a zipping hot day in July." What Freddy's figures lacked in felicity they made up for in picturesque vigor.

"Look here," he queried with a sly twinkle in his eyes, "why don't you get married?"

"I get married!" exclaimed Lionel in astonishment.

"Well, authors do commit matrimony now and then—even the best of them. Now, there was Miss Faulkner. I thought you liked her pretty well."

"Miss Faulkner is a very nice girl," observed the great author, as though Miss Faulkner were a being on another planet.

"A bully girl!" asserted Freddy. "When was the last time you saw her?"

"Oh, dear me, I haven't seen her in ages—ages. My dear boy, marriage is entirely out of the question for me. I should no more think of marrying than

of going to the moon," declared Lionel.

"You know, from your books I've never been able to tell just where you stood on it. Sometimes you seem strong for it—and then again you give it hell," said the boy.

"In this parlous age one is compelled to compromise one's sincerity—now and then. Perhaps sometimes I do seem to extol marriage. In reality I regard it merely as an expedient for the fulfillment of certain racial ends," replied Lionel, with inimitable éclat, that lessened to some extent the bromidic inanity of the last statement.

"Eating is an expedient," observed Freddy, "but it's a damn pleasant expedient."

"When your digestion is normal and you have a good appetite. But one's appetite for love—ah, that's a very difficult thing to keep on edge."

"People ought to do, like I do when my digestive apparatus gets out of kink—fletcherize," said Freddy with a mischievous chuckle.

"Fletcherize love! What extremes of banal wit you stoop to!" exclaimed Lionel in disgust.

"Certainly! Be sure you're doing your part!" retorted the boy.

The great author straightened up in his chair and regarded his protégé with admiring eyes.

"The sheerest sophistry, Frederic—but very clever indeed," he commented as he drew a notebook from his pocket. "Er—do you mind if I jot it down?"

"Not at all. Help yourself," responded the boy with an embarrassed grin.

"Arrant sophistry—but clever—clever!" murmured Lionel as he wrote.

"I wish you'd explain—in your best fifty-cent-a-word brand of prose—why you're down on marriage," said Freddy.

Lionel replaced the notebook, settled back in the chair and allowed his eyes to wander ruminatively about the room.

"After years and years of painstaking effort," he began at length, "I have trained my mind to see things in their entirety—life in its entirety. A trivial



incident suggests a whole train of contributing causes—a chance remark may epitomize a life philosophy and I see—in all their heartrending completeness—in the years that have gone to evolve it.

"There are a thousand and one phases of this much discussed problem of matrimony that are not apparent to an undisciplined imagination.

"I see a boy and a girl seated upon a bench in the park gazing at each other in wrapt adoration—wholly oblivious of all else. A picture of the succeeding events presents itself immediately—the engagement, the fatuous preparations, the altar, and finally the cottage or small apartment. I see them setting out upon their way with fine, resolute courage, determined to get the very most out of life they can.

"They can't see—nor in the nature of things could they be expected to see—that love, real love, is an exalted passion—nine-parts spiritual—which the modern institution of marriage, with its creaky, unstable foundations, and encumbrance of archaic tradition, makes its impossible to realize even in an appreciable degree.

"To go on: I hear these young people's affirmations of frankness, I hear their fervent declarations that so long as they have their love no labor is too onerous, no sacrifices too great, and I see those declarations sealed with passionate kisses. Then I see the looming shadow of their first quarrel—the first rift in that gossamer veil of romance which has obscured the pressing realities of their position. Gradually the thousand and one petty, sordid problems with which they are called upon to deal weigh in upon their souls, and I see the lustre of that all-consuming love beginning to dim. I see the long, lingering illness of the girl in the hospital after the birth of the first child. In my mind's eye I have a picture of the small desk in the dingy little sitting-room—littered with unpaid bills, and the pale, haggard face of the boy as he paces agitatedly about. I see him getting up after sleepless nights and rush-

ing off to work with the glint of desperation in his eyes. From thence on he throws himself into his work with an abandon that in time renders him nervous and irritable—implants an irritability in his nature that he is *never* quite able to eradicate. I have a vision of them quarreling more often than before—of the old frankness disappearing—of them both becoming visibly secretive and beginning to practice a petty deceit in their relations with one another—and of the girl resorting to that despicable feminine wile of tears to gain her point.

"With the passage of years it is quite reasonable to suppose that the boy goes into business for himself, and by the dint of persistent industry eventually achieves success. I see them living in a more pretentious apartment or house, and there seem to be fewer bills on the large mahogany desk which has replaced the smaller one. I see them entering upon a period of quasi-contentment through which, however, each grows insensibly more concerned in the attainment of their individual ambitions and desires—he, the accomplishment, let us say, of some impressive, semi-idealistic scheme—she, the achievement of social prominence, the creation of a more imposing home establishment—better clothes for herself and her children—a retinue of servants—a country home—automobiles, and the acquisition of everything else that masquerades as the specie of happiness. All of that tender intimacy, that buoyant camaraderie, that quick sympathy from which love takes its nourishment has—"

"Hold on! Hold on! What are you giving us?" cried Freddy with visible agitation. "They're not all like that. Why, I know people—"

"My dear Frederic," interposed Lionel, "our discussion began with the problem of conserving love. I'm taking an average case. You and I know people who cherish a sort of milk-and-water affection which they hypocritically flaunt before the world as love. We know people who haven't even this,

and yet who—either through a cheap sentimental vanity or a desire for the approbation of society—manifest an ardent demonstrativeness toward each other which is supposed to convey the measure of their affection. But love! Ye gods! If they ever had it, it was lost by the wayside long ago. You and I know people who have become a habit with each other—or a necessity—or those who remain together because of certain hide-bound misconceptions of social duty.

"Human nature is a tragically volatile element—enduring only in its volatility—and only a few, a very, very few, heroic souls survive the sordid demands of interminable, intimate association with a realized love which, in any sense, approaches the radiant ideal they started out with. There are a certain class of stodgy individuals to whom this makes no difference. A supine, lollypop contentment satisfies them. I'm not talking about invertebrates of that sort. I'm talking about people with a vital impulse to live and to be—like you and me. And these, whether they have money or whether they haven't, or whether they have position or whether they haven't, or whether they're forced to struggle or whether they're not, face in each other potentialities of latent spleen and unsuspected moral turpitude and problems of temperament and taste, which contemplated in perspective simply stagger the imagination. I want no association which means the slow stultification of everything that is best in me. I want love—love in its essence—the kind that lifts and vivifies and inspires. If this is an unattainable something, then I propose to contemplate its transcendent image in monastic beatitude, and I indignantly resent the attitude of a presumptuous Infinite who would ensnare me into an alliance by gross misrepresentation and maudlin allurements in the interest of a fantastic scheme for propagating a race of puling nincompoops!"

Lionel paused and surveyed the scurrying "nincompoops" on the pave-

ment below with petulant contempt. Freddy brooded in silence.

Eventually Lionel, being possessed of further weighty views on love and matrimony, girded up his linguistic loins, as it were, and proceeded with renewed energy.

He dwelt with fine rhetorical fervor upon the harassments and difficulties which must surely beset later life, even if the earlier storms were weathered with relative success—of the disappointments in children—of their illnesses and possible deaths—of the likelihood of financial reverses, and of the very probable bickerings, misunderstandings and conflicts with relatives that would fall to their lot, and waxed flamboyantly eloquent over the mother-in-law bugaboo. He traced with uncompromising realism the gradual widening of the breach between husband and wife to that unhappy hour, when, in the anguish of their racked souls, they turn—she to the One Man—and he to the One Woman; then depicted with those masterful strokes, of which he alone of all novelists was capable, the subsequent developments, scamping none of the prurient possibilities, and ended up by giving a marvelously vivid picture of the discovery, the scandal, and finally the divorce.

"Stop! Stop!" cried Freddy in anguished tones, as he placed his head in his hands and rocked it gently to and fro, "You've given me the willies for fair!"

When it came to presenting the Truth—as he saw it—Lionel Arrow-smith was as merciless as a medieval inquisitor. The picture, he felt, still remained in need of a touch or two to render it complete. As a preliminary to adding them he lit a fresh cigarette and favored the "nincompoops" with a glance of appraising scorn.

"My dear boy," he said, turning once more to the shrivelled lump of despair before him, "remember—remember, too, that the feminine temperament is an unfathomable quantity. I fancy that a considerable portion of your waking existence, in common

with a few other million males, more or less—who in their pristine ignorance have been led to enter this blissful state of matrimony—will be given up to a melancholy pondering of its profundities and disparities. Take heart, lad, take heart! Not unless you had studied women, as I have—voluminously—dispassionately—could you begin to have an adequate conception of the amazing vagaries of which their natures are capable. You haven't any idea of their astounding incapacity for straightforward, lucid argument—of the scope of the far-fetched and grotesque irrelevancies they can resort to in an effort to establish some childish arbitrary position, justify a contrary mood or further a wilful whim. They are creatures of instinct and impulse—as uncertain as tropical weather. They have a habit of flying into a rage over the most trivial matters and of reviling you—with feline venom and without the slightest justification—for every conceivable sort of villainy and neglect. My boy, it's my business to know! My investigations cover the widest possible range."

Lionel halted and leaned back in his chair with the expansive, self-approving nonchalance of one who, having discharged himself of a formidable broadside—literally rocked marriage from its pinions in the social scheme and sent his arguments fulminating down the corridors of time—had been put to no great mental exertion by the effort, and held in reserve an abundance of palpitating thought on the subject which he was ready to offer upon the slightest provocation.

Freddy was manifestly not the same individual he had been twenty minutes before. His mind was enveloped by a black cloud of despair. The youthful, oppugnant blitheness had departed utterly. He presented the appearance of one whose digestive system had suddenly become short-circuited. He sat in his chair staring into space with an expression of tragic melancholy.

Lionel rose slowly. "I've a chapter to do this evening," he said. "The

publishers are right on my heels. I must be getting along."

"Oh—oh, you're going!" ejaculated Freddy feebly.

The great author nodded. "Frederic, my boy," he explained with condescending commiseration, "you know it's nothing more nor less than my sacred duty to present the truth, as I see it."

"Damn it, go on—if you're going!" cried the boy in a sudden burst of anger. "You're a colossal, unprincipled kill-joy—that's what you are!"

"Frederic!" gasped Lionel in outraged astonishment. Freddy gazed steadily out of the balcony. The great author regarded his protégé in pained silence for a moment, then slowly his features set in an expression of stoical self-righteousness—the expression of one who, though slightly shocked by this quite unforeseen manifestation, has not had his general estimate of human ingratitude lowered to any appreciable extent and could in reason expect no other reward for well-meaning service than that which proceeds from inner spiritual sources. He turned and moved quickly away.

For some days following Freddy was not himself. As a conclusive proof of the soundness of the theory of the ascendancy of mind over matter, his digestive apparatus really became sadly out of kilter. His torpid, melancholy condition was the source of no end of distress to his mother and father and other members of the family. He was not at all disposed to enlighten them as to the cause and resorted to no end of ingenious mendacity to keep them from putting him to bed and sending for a doctor.

A week elapsed without his visiting Paula. It was quite probable he would have allowed another to pass without doing so if she hadn't called him up and frantically demanded an explanation of his neglect. He contrived to placate her by declaring that he couldn't go into details over the 'phone and promised to see her at once. Accordingly, that afternoon he hastened out

to the Danforth country home, beset by a thousand tremors and misgivings.

"After all," ruminated Freddy as he rode out on the trolley, "we haven't known each other very long and perhaps I have speeded things up a little too fast. A queer look comes into her eyes when she doesn't like a thing. She may be hell inside for all I know."

He found Paula—a vision of fluffy whiteness—waiting in eager impatience on the front veranda. There was an unmistakable redness about her eyes and little puffy welts under them that showed rather prominently against the transparent whiteness of her skin. At the outset she was exaggeratedly buoyant and manifested an effusive interest in everything he said, her manner gradually lapsing into a sort of hard brightness. Freddy noticed, however, that there was a subdued, tremulous quality in her tones and a jerkiness about her movements which seem to indicate that her agitation had not been entirely dispelled by his presence. He wondered whether her woman's intuition had sensed his changed attitude. Well, all the better for him if she had.

Papa Danforth and Mamma Danforth puffed through a set of tennis on a court nearby, pausing every moment or so to make invidious comparisons between their respective styles of play in loud and querulous voices. For greater privacy Freddy and Paula strolled down the winding sun-dappled driveway, over-arched by towering elms, and entered the rambling, old-fashioned garden, enclosed on three sides by herbaceous borders and tall, swaying poplars. The air was heavy with the subjugating odor of jasmine, honeysuckle and clove-pink. The spell of the place took hold of the boy as it had so many times before.

It seemed to him at first—as he took casual stock of his sensations—that after all he did love Paula—very much. She was adorable—exquisitely charming—yet— The more persistently he endeavored to inquire into the validity of this feeling, however, the more uncertain and agitated he grew. What a

queer thing imagination was! It had reared a bulwark of inhibitions in his mind that even the magic of her presence could not down. There she was—like some precious anodyne—an anodyne, though, whose reactions might be of a very terrible and lasting character. Did she only fascinate him? Ah, well, if that was all, he must own she fascinated him immeasurably!

But it was only during conversational gaps that he was able to make these introspective excursions. Paula's chatter required response, and he had been alertly punctilious about the matter, though he realized that what he had said had been imbecilically fragmentary and inane. The girl began to press him for a detailed account of his movements during the preceding week. He brought all of his conversational powers to bear in a dexterous attempt to spar for time; he wanted to wait until the drama of warring impulse, reason, and desire that was enacting itself within had yielded up a definite purpose—until he was calm enough to do full justice to the very convincing narrative he had concocted on the way out—a narrative dealing mainly with the pressure of business, the visit of friends and his father's illness. Paula, however, was insistent. In extenuation he launched stumbingly forth on his tale and before he was half through he had made a complete botch of it. He discovered that with her tender eyes leveled upon him he was not even capable of elementary ingenuity in handling incident and that his heretofore recognized ability for logical exposition was non-existent. He was miserably conscious that she was aware it was all a palpable fiction. Paula had very much wanted to be convinced—in fact she had resolutely prepared herself to be convinced—but his attempt to lie angered her beyond measure. In a fury of feminine resentment she accused him of deception, and of employing the deception for the despicable purpose of keeping her in ignorance of his relations with another girl.

"You're interested in Isabel Town-

send! You don't care for me any more!" she cried, pacing agitatedly to and fro. The gravel path was very narrow and her skirts switched petals from the flowers on either side.

It was now Freddy's turn to wax wroth. His quick temper needed only a prod of this kind to stir it into flame.

"That's not so! You know it isn't! I haven't seen her in months!" he retorted hotly.

"It is, it is! Oh, I've felt it all the time! You've never cared for me! You've only liked me—or thought you did—and yet you've led me on! Told me that I was the most wonderful girl in the world—given me beautiful things! You're a wilful, unscrupulous deceiver—that's what you are!"

She went on in a manner that was a revelation to Freddy. The tears ricocheted down her lovely cheeks in torrents. She stamped and sobbed and wrung her hands, and in the intervals, when connected speech was possible, gave him a picture of his villainy that was deep and dark and sinister. Portions of Lionel's illuminating discourse on the feminine temperament began to present themselves with marked vividness in the youth's mind. In a fearful, desolating moment it came upon him that everything Lionel had said might be true—something that he had been entirely unwilling to concede until now. He took himself manfully in hand and effected a hasty departure. That night he wrote Paula a letter—a very short letter—stating in the baldest terms that so far as he was concerned their engagement was definitely broken.

\* \* \*

One bright Sabbath morn about a month later found Freddy meandering through the park. Meandering is used advisedly, for he did not walk in the ordinary sense of the word. He merely moved his feet in an indefinite fashion, thereby propelling himself aimlessly, hither and yon, without thought of destination. His soul was unutterably burdened by the nostalgia of purposeless existence. His life, he felt,

was hopelessly blighted and those black swirling waters of the river—which Mrs. Southworth and Laura Jean Libby have painted with such unexampled skill—seemed to be clamoring relentlessly for the disintegrating remnant of what had once been a very vivid and promising personality.

He had just started up a flight of stairs leading to the artificial glen when he came face to face with a very elegant and debonair dandy, who was on the point of brushing past him, when he halted abruptly and cried lustily, "Frederic!"

It was Lionel. He wore a frock coat, silk hat, gray spats and swung a large gold-headed cane. He carried himself with the blithe insouciance of a college freshman.

"Oh—oh, Lionel!" ejaculated Freddy glumly.

"I've been intending to call you up. Where have you been keeping yourself?" demanded the great author.

"I've been awfully busy," lied the boy.

The truth of the matter was he had resolved to keep out of the range of Lionel's presence for the time being. This all-seeing Frankenstein had a capacity for disillusionment that surpassed belief! Freddy had feared that his mind, in its present enfeebled condition, might succumb utterly under another onslaught.

"Well, well! I'm glad to see you!" exclaimed Lionel with unaccustomed good nature. "I—er—I don't suppose you've heard." He paused and smiled fatuously.

Freddy was at a complete loss to account for this unwonted sprightliness of manner.

"Heard what?" he asked with a puzzled frown.

"Of my engagement to Miss Faulkner!"

Freddy gave vent to a plaintive, mournful cry of dismay.

"Yes," went on his garrulous friend, "we're to be—er—married on the twenty-sixth of next month."

"The devil you say!" exclaimed



Freddy with an incredulous gulp. "Do you mean to tell me you're going to marry, after all you've said about women and matrimony?" he demanded harshly.

"Er—my dear boy," replied Lionel, groping for words, "what I said to you concerned women in general—the type. Miss Faulkner is one of those unusual exceptions. She is quite the most remarkable and fascinating woman I have ever met! She combines a masculine quality of perception, breadth of view and poise with that—er—outer feminine charm. Er—ah—she is so vastly different—"

"But what about marriage—its unstable foundations and all that stuff?" inquired Freddy with menace in his tones.

"Frederic," said Lionel with heavy judicial aplomb, "we live in a very material world—er—a crassly practical

and superficial world. Miss Faulkner has asked me to—er—go through the form of marriage for certain social and family reasons—and I have very reluctantly consented to do so. Of course we are both keenly aware of its unimportance so far as having any bearing upon our fundamental relations—er—ah—we shall accord each other the fullest freedom—attempt to establish a sort of marital ideal—and considering Miss Faulkner's very extraordinary temperamental qualifications—"

"Business of consulting his watch. "My dear boy, I'm to meet her at half-past ten. It's almost that now. Er—good-bye, good-bye. You'll get the announcements soon, old chap."

He dashed off. Freddy stood staring after him with an expression of deep malignance. He wondered whether Paula would take him back. It was doubtful—yet—yet—



## A SONG FOR APRIL

By John Hanlon

ALL through the darkness of the winter months,  
 I felt that I could not endure the pain  
 Of never feeling her dear lips touch mine,  
 Of never hearing her soft voice again:  
 But now, when full-rigged ships of fleecy white  
 Scud through the sky, and in the earth's warm breast  
 Flowers are stirring, and the fragrant air  
 Is as caressing as the arms of night;  
 The sorrow, that so long upon me pressed  
 And weighed me down with heart-devouring cares,  
 Seems to be lightened. I can think of her  
 Without the bitter scourge of scalding tears.



A PRETTY girl: any girl who is unknown to your hearers.





# THE HONOR OF A GENTLEMAN

By Robert McBlair

TEDDY RIVERS had a wife who was sick of having him brought home drunk; unreasonably so, he would have said, for the thing had not happened many times; nevertheless, she was desperate and determined. To come of white-ribboner stock that has maintained its principles even in South Carolina is to have not only temperance opinions, but temperance instincts, and an instinct violated becomes a goad to madness.

Archibald Vendeveer's gentlemanly sensibilities were unpleasantly aware of this situation when it devolved upon him, as an intimate of the Riverses, to be responsible for Teddy's homebringing after young Somebody-or-other's dinner to his ushers. He was the more disturbed as he was fond of Constance, in the same way that he felt she was fond of him: a sort of permissible extra-marital affection, verging (in flirtatious half moments only) upon the phosphorescent. He was fond of her as he would have been fond of any attractive woman whom he saw so often in the intimacy of family friendship, and who allowed him sometimes to kiss her hand.

The hour was two in the morning; he was due at another little party immediately his task was accomplished; so as soon as the limousine stopped he got Teddy together.

The trip up the doorsteps was made without accident, the puffing chauffeur assisting. The latch key was found in Teddy's pocket, and Archibald steered him inside, telling the chauffeur to wait. Balancing his man with one hand, he switched on the hall light, and then they began on the business of getting

upstairs. It was slow work, of resolution, effort, and backsliding, with intervals of repose. Teddy could stand erect if someone balanced him; he could mount steps even; but he showed a constant inclination, almost a purpose, to lean against the banisters and go to sleep.

The next floor was finally achieved. There was no sign of Constance. Only to cross the hall to Teddy's room, and the worst was past. He began on the journey, got two-thirds across; then another door opened and Constance, in a pale blue peignoir, stood framed in the doorway.

It was an embarrassing moment; he felt sorry for her vaguely; but he thought more of how sweet she looked in her blue negligée. She showed no agitation, no anger; but her face was pale. She stopped still and looked Teddy over with such a strange look, such a compound of bitter amusement and white-faced resolve, that Archibald was constrained to turn and look, too.

A lock of Teddy's black hair hung over his nose, his rich dark coloring was accentuated, and the expression of his refined, intelligent face was caricatured by a loose-hanging mouth and half-open eyes. His eye-glass ribbon had been cut and the two ends dangled foolishly from his forward leaning neck, while his rumpled white shirt framed a splotch of Burgundy like a mortal wound. Yet despite all this there was something taking in his slender, athletic figure fitted closely by the black evening clothes, in the glow of youth beneath his fresh skin.

Archibald turned to Constance.

"Put him in there." She pointed, with her wrist curved daintily.

Archibald supported Teddy into the room and closed the door. He felt that he must make it as easy as possible for Constance; the servants need not know; so he undressed Teddy as one would undress a dead man, worked him into a pair of pajamas, and rolled him into bed.

This done, he brushed his hair and arranged his white tie before the mirror, peered through the blinds and saw that his chauffeur had understood him and was keeping his limousine in waiting, and then, extinguishing the light in the room, let himself softly out into the hall.

The hall was faintly illuminated by the light from the landing below and by that which issued from the still open door of Constance's room. As the knob of Teddy's door clicked shut, Constance appeared again in her doorway and came towards him.

"Where are you going, Archie?" she asked, laying her hand, which he felt to tremble a little, on his arm.

"There is a business dinner on down town," he replied in a low tone.

"Oh, don't go," she requested in a harsh, determined little voice. "I want to have a party here."

She laughed nervously, excitedly.

"I am going to have some fun, too!" she cried. "Why should I sit at home and be worried to death while Teddy goes out and has a good time? I had as leave be kissed by one drunken man as another. Come, there are some drinks downstairs. Let's go down and get them!"

She slipped her little cold hand into his, and Vandever regarded her sharply.

"You are excited," he told her. "You don't know what you are saying. And you're cold." He placed half of his overcoat about her. She snuggled close to him and looked up in his face.

"Why don't you kiss me?" she asked like a child, desperately. "You may, I don't care. I'm done with caring!"

"There, there," he said, as if to com-

pose her; but he was not unaware of her arm against him, and he leaned down and kissed her solemnly on the cheek. "My poor child," he murmured tenderly with his face against hers.

Archibald was now thinking, not clearly and logically, but in a series of emotional flashes. When he kissed her he remembered somehow an old couplet:

*"Few are both true and tender, and he  
grew  
In time a little tenderer than true."*

An aversion arose out of this for his not quite honest affection; but in its turn the thought of rejecting and losing her caused him to gather her suddenly to him and to bury his face in her hair.

She was complaisant, but her passivity brought home to him that she was there—because of Teddy. He thought of Teddy, handsome, well-to-do, with a position in the community. Yes, what would Teddy's friends (who were his friends also) think? He imagined their whisperings, their covert glances and shrugs whenever he entered a room.

. . . And it could not last. There was no real affection to keep it up . . . Then—the risk! Suppose Constance should confess in remorse? . . . On the other hand, there would be her gratitude if in this moment he saved her from herself . . . Gratitude—and esteem. It is nice to have someone admire you—appreciate you . . .

If she only showed more ardor his act of salvation would be the greater. But with her head relaxed against his arm, her body in a despairing lassitude against his, Constance was looking past him with wide eyes as though at the vanishing spectres of things passing or the darker phantoms of things to come.

Her indifference piqued him. He moved toward the steps. But suddenly he stopped.

"No, no," he murmured. "You are distraught. I'm awfully fond of you, dear. But we must remember that I am Teddy's friend. It wouldn't be honor-

able. Come, you must go to sleep and get some rest and stop all this terrible worrying."

His arm about her, he led her to the door of her room and kissed her once more on her dry, parted lips. In tremendous revulsion, she twisted away at his touch and buried her face.

He turned out the light in the hall and went softly down the stairs. "To the *Rouge et Noir*," he told his chauffeur, and in a moment he was rolling through the deserted streets, turned to black mirrors by a misty rain.

His mind was spurred by the incident, and he thought of his deportment in the scene with some little pleasure. It roused his imagination, this sudden freak of Constance's, and he was moved to meditate upon its causes.

The unsettling of her love for Teddy started it, he concluded. What anchors a woman in the harbor of faithfulness is love, he decided. A gentleman's anchor, of course, is honor. Honor with man is an idea; with woman it is an affection or an instinct. He wondered if a woman could even understand the abstract idea of honor. Chivalry was a set of ideas; and the idea of honor to a friend which had actuated him in their little scene was but one of the ideas of chivalry.

He continued to ruminate. . . . In one of Ibsen's plays—"A Doll's House," he believed—the husband said: "I would gladly work for you day and night, Nora,—bear sorrow and want for your sake—but no man sacrifices his honor, even for one he loves."

Nora answered: "Millions of women have done so."

And this was heralded as a heavy blow at men and extravagant praise of women. Whereas, in truth, it was but a confession of woman's lack of an appreciation of honor. To the husband, honor was something so definite, so precious, that he would never give it up. To this the wife replied: "Millions of women have done so." And the world applauded!

He laughed, pleased with having turned the tables on a famous play-

wright and shown the world to be wrong. It was a pity that no third person had been present to hear him. One can never say these things so well the second time . . .

He yawned and looked at his watch, thinking he would be late at the party. Just then his car stopped at its destination.

The gay crowd of men and girls in evening clothes was trooping down the front steps as he emerged from his machine.

"Your little friend is upstairs. We're going down town. Hurry up and join us," they called to him. He went on up the steps.

A girl was sitting alone at a round table. Empty glasses and pushed back chairs spoke of the crowd just gone, and her aloneness was emphasized by a soberness of dress and of demeanor and by the glass that stood untouched at her hand.

"Cheer up!" he cried genially. "What's the matter?"

She looked up at him with the flutter of a smile. She differed from the flip-pant girls just gone by a certain freshness of complexion, and her drab brown tailored suit spoke rather of genteel poverty than of the gayety of midnight frolic. He was irritated a little. After staying up so late he didn't intend to have his evening spoiled by a sad face.

"What's the matter?" he repeated, putting a hand on her arm and shaking her a little.

"You wouldn't want to know."

"Yes, I would," he asserted, seating himself and taking her hand.

He was agreeably conscious that she was impressed by his clothes and his finished bearing, and yet when she looked up at him again with her half smile it was as though to seek a friend.

"It was my mother."

He frowned slightly.

"Didn't you 'phone her that you were going out with one of the girls?"

"Yes, but she doesn't like Peggy. She knows she's—gay." Her voice choked and her eyes swam with tears. "Once before—I came in late with

Peggy—and she cried." A tear spilled from each eye and made an irregular course towards the corner of her mouth.

"Oh, come now," he said, shaking her arm. "Be a sport."

"I don't like to see mother cry." A little sob broke from her.

He got up and drew her to her feet, took his handkerchief and wiped her eyes. "Come, now," he commanded forcefully, but kindly. "You want to be a good fellow, don't you? Drink your drink."

She drank it, then smiled up at him,

very much, no doubt, as she smiled up at the stronger-willed girl who had brought her there. With the tears still fresh on her cheeks a ray of hope lightened her weak, rather pretty face at the idea, anyhow, of being a good fellow.

"You have nothing to worry about so far as your reputation is concerned," he told her as he helped her into the limousine and gave the chauffeur the order to drive to his apartments. "You are with a gentleman, you know." He put his arm 'round her. "A man of honor."



## BORN TO IT

By William Sanford

**T**HERE was once a young man, properly regarded as a fool. He was the laughing stock of the town in which he lived.

He endeavored to learn a trade, but at carpentering he could not hit a nail, at bricklaying he could not lay a brick and at painting he upset the cans.

He tried to work on a farm, but could not tell vegetables from weeds, and consequently hoed up the farmer's produce. No one could teach him to milk a cow and he planted hen's eggs in the fields, thinking he would raise chickens from the soil.

He was given work as a hod carrier, but did not know enough to fill up the hod.

Consequently he was discharged from everything.

On rainy days he did not know enough to go inside. It was on a rainy day that a great man from a neighboring city saw him, and instantly realized the young man's proper calling.

The great man took him to the city. He became an instant success!

He went into vaudeville.



**E**VERY man is a natural-born fool, but it always takes a woman to convince him of it.

## SOMEBODY'S PARADISE

By Richard Fletcher

AS he stood on Mrs. Latteran's doorstep that November afternoon, Sidney St. John was amused to find himself seriously considering flight.

He had rung the bell—of bronze, like the handrail—and in a few seconds the Chinese butler would open the door. But even yet there was time; St. John could dash down the steps and round the corner, and the solemnly distinguished Ping-ti would open the door to a blank. The gray, aloof-looking little painter smiled wearily as he visualised himself tearing away into the dusk, away from the horrors of Mrs. Latteran's house, Mrs. Latteran's middle-aged and boring beauty, Mrs. Latteran's prattle about art.

St. John sighed as he followed the iron-gray figure of the Chinaman up the broad, black-carpeted stairs. His own house in Chelsea was bare with a beautiful bareness, austere with an austerity that was the outcome of the great painter's own spirit. Mrs. Latteran's house was packed full of priceless and beautiful things crammed together with none of that knowledge of the individualities of objects which makes some art collections more than glorified shops. St. John happened to loathe embroideries, and No. 31 Cumberland Square was intricate with needlework from every country on earth. He was an unhappy little man as he threaded his way through the drawing room to the corner where, under a Burmese candelabrum, Mrs. Latteran sat behind her tea-tray.

"Ah, here you are, St. John," she cried, holding out to him a short white hand, innocent of jewels. "I had near-

ly given you up. And I *do* want your advice."

It was one of the days when all poor St. John's manifold *bêtes noires* seemed to pounce on him at once. He hated being called by his surname by women, and of all things he hated giving advice. Mrs. Latteran was, too, he could see, upset. Her flushed face seemed to have stretched a little, so that the outline of her chin was blurred. Her little pale eyes held a cold light and her mouth was pursed.

"You see," she began at once, forgetting even the elementary virtue of allowing a guest to slake his thirst before she unfolded her troubles to him, "it's that Desmond boy. My portrait, you know." St. John bowed.

"The portrait is—unsatisfactory?"

"Unsatisfactory?" Mrs. Latteran's carefully compressed bosom gave a heave that must have hurt her. "It is a libel! It is—ridiculous!"

"The last time I saw it—" he protested gently—but she interrupted him.

"Ah, yes, you liked it, I remember. And it *was* better then, although I didn't like it from the first. But now! It has come—came this morning. That's why I telephoned you. You see," she added, an edge of spite in her voice, "you advised me to let him paint me."

"Yes, I greatly admire the boy's work," he returned. "No more tea, thanks. He has something very like genius, Mrs. Latteran."

"Yes. I know you said so. Well, will you look at it?"

Patiently he followed her into the next room, and there, propped up on a table, stood the portrait. St. John just stopped in time the exclamation on his

lips. The portrait was more Mrs. Latteran than Mrs. Latteran herself was. Young Desmond had surpassed himself. Unfortunately Mrs. Latteran had caught the look in the thin little man's face.

"You laugh! Of course you do," she cried in high triumph. "I never saw such a caricature in my life. It looks like—like a cook!"

It did.

St. John drew a deep breath and set his mouth.

"It is a magnificent piece of work, Mrs. Latteran," he said shortly. "I am proud of Jasper Desmond."

Her face went a queer violent pink. "Then you might like to buy it," she snapped. "I certainly will not."

"You have bought it."

"Oh, no! O, no, I haven't! When you made me have him paint me you said you knew I should like it, and I said—I distinctly remember saying—that he might try, and that, if I liked it, I'd buy it. Well, I don't like it."

St. John turned on her the quiet fire of his sunken gray eyes.

"He has put four months' hard work into that picture, Mrs. Latteran."

"And I have wasted morning after morning sitting to him, just because I promised you. And Jules Vautrin asked me to sit to him. Vautrin!"

"I see."

"He wouldn't have made me look fifty-five," she went on, scowling at the face on the canvas.

"No. Vautrin would without doubt have made you look much younger—than you are."

St. John was sorry when it was said, but there dwelt in him such a hot detestation of this woman that he had been unable to resist.

Her mouth tightened. "Well, I was going to ask you to advise me how to refuse it without hurting his feelings too much. But you admire the picture so much you will no doubt buy it yourself, so I need not worry."

He was amazed at the coarseness of her thought, for she was a rather clever woman in spite of her artistic nonsense,

and this was the first time he had seen so far into her soul.

Time was when Sydney St. John was a quick-tongued man, and would have answered that he had no great wish to possess Mrs. Latteran's portrait. But nowadays he was gentle and tired and patient. So he said nothing, regretting his former outburst, until, as they re-entered the drawing room, he noted the absence of a large Chinese jar which had formerly stood by the door.

"Oh, the jar? Gone! I am getting rid of most of my Chinese and Japanese stuff. I am quite mad about Persian art. Don't you think it heavenly?" she returned, plainly delighted at the change of subject and winding herself up to one of her appalling perorations.

"I discovered some Persian drawings in an old shop—quite an *unknown* one—in Paris the other day, and have decided to go in for them. So detailed the work, so restrained! I believe all modern art is based on sixteenth century Persian . . ." She prattled on about Mirak and Bihzad until St. John felt that his visit had lasted as long as was absolutely necessary, and gravely took his departure.

He had not again referred to Desmond's portrait, nor had she, and he knew that she believed her flow of enthusiastic babble about things that belonged to his Holy of Holies to have effaced entirely the unpleasant effect that her vulgar ill-temper about the picture had made.

"Detestable virago!" the little man said mentally to himself, as he walked through the wet streets to his club. "Vulgar and pretentious ignoramus!" Then recalling with the acute visualisation peculiar to him, young Desmond's masterly revealing of this quality of pretentious and sordid ignorance, St. John laughed aloud.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ten days later Mrs. Latteran, draped in ropes of large pearls, sat at dinner between Jules Vautrin, the French portrait painter, and a dark, sombre man with very red lips that gleamed like coral in his beard.



This was Abbas Zahrat, the Persian Minister, and to him the lady was unfolding much wisdom regarding the art of his country. Abbas Zahrat should, according to the rules of the appropriate as they prevail in fiction, have been amused or angry by her abysmal ignorance of her subject, but he was not.

His ignorance of Persian painting of the sixteenth century was rather more abysmal than her own; the painting that interested his jaded Oriental mind was of the kind usually applied with a hare's foot, and the art that enthralled him, the art of ladies of musical comedy. So he was not offended by Mrs. Latteran's talk. What is worse, he was bored. Bored to a degree of hatred hardly to be grasped by her European victims. His sunken black eyes burned with ferocity, and he concealed wide crimson yawns only partially. Towards the end of dinner, Jasper Desmond heard him say, in answer to a very pressing question:

"I believe the best of these painters was Mirak. I have one," he yawned.

"Oh, do tell me about it! What is the subject? And the coloring? I think the Persian coloring is wonderfully voluptuous, don't you?" she gushed, arching her eyebrows. His Excellency gave her a curious side glance.

"Very. And the subjects, too," he conceded drily. St. John bit his lip and young Desmond burst out laughing.

"That one of yours," he put in, leaning across the table, "my word, yes! But it is a gorgeous thing." The Persian's face softened as he looked at the boy.

"You like it?"

"Rather. It's magnificent."

"Then," the Persian answered slowly, "if the portrait you make of my little boy is a success, you shall have the Mirak."

Mrs. Latteran's face and bosom em-purpled faintly and St. John read her thoughts. If this queer dark man wished to give away his painting, why could he not have given it to her—to her who has wasted so many over-ripe blandishments on him.

St. John ate his grapes thoughtfully.

When the ladies had left the dining room to what only a few of the more enlightened ones can ever realise to be the delight of their temporary absence, the old painter looked at the Ambassador.

"Mrs. Latteran is deeply interested in the art of your country," he said. His Excellency made a gesture of frank horror.

"She is a very dreadful lady," he returned.

\* \* \* \* \*

One day about a fortnight later Desmond's shabby studio was invaded by the opulent presence of Mrs. Latteran. She came in, covered with sables and mellow with condescension.

"It is nice of you to ask me to see the treasures," she said amiably. "Mr. St. John, of course, told you how sorry I was to have been rather rude about the portrait. So we need never think about it again, need we?" She smiled, but her small eyes were already resting on the treasure she had come to see.

"Never again, Mrs. Latteran," Desmond replied, "and—there is the Persian picture."

The picture represented a gorgeous fanciful orchard flooded with a peculiarly radiant light. Great orange trees hung their boughs heavy-laden with fruit, and the sky over and through the trees was the color of a greenish turquoise. In the middle foreground, under the trees, were grouped the figures of many women; moon-faced women with full, red lips; women all contented, all triumphant. At their feet crouched lions, full maned, but subdued, as if some quality possessed by the placid ladies had tamed them.

The extreme foreground represented a quaintly carved stone railing held up by naked, writhing men, on whose suffering, grief-ravaged faces was written the burden of labor that sustained the luxury and enjoyment of the women. And in the vivid blue of the sky hung an oddly shaped golden cloud, a few words written on it in Arabic charac-

ters. The thing was a blaze of color, arresting and skilful.

St. John and Desmond watched Mrs. Latteran's study of the picture in silence, the small, thin martyr to success standing by her side. At last she spoke.

"It really is rather nice, you know," she purred. "I suppose Abbas Zahrat is *quite* sure about the painter."

"Oh, absolutely," returned St. John promptly.

"Quite so. Extraordinarily generous of him to give a Mirak away, wasn't it?" Her voice was cold with sudden suspicion. "I myself think it more like Bihzad. What do you think of it, Mr. St. John?"

"It might be, of course," he murmured.

"I suppose Abbas Zahrat ought to know," she went on. "I wonder what the Arabic means?"

"The name of the picture," young Desmond said, speaking for the first time, is 'Somebody's Paradise.'"

"How delightful! What a charming title! Of course you don't think of selling it, Mr. Desmond?" There was a pause, then the painter answered:

"It is not a very nice thing to do—to sell a present—but I have been disappointed in one or two commissions of late . . ."

Mrs. Latteran winced.

An hour later she was escorted to her carriage by the weary lions, and the tortured, naked men.

Two evenings later a grand dinner party was given by Mrs. Latteran (Mr. Latteran dined at the Sarcophagus Club that night) in honor of her new acquisition. As the guests arrived they were led by their hostess to the place where, as if enthroned, "Somebody's Paradise," flooded with cunningly contrived light, hung against a piece of black brocade. To one or two favored ones the price paid for the picture was just whispered. It was a stupendous price even for Mrs. Latteran, "but the Ambassador himself gave it to Mr. Desmond," she would add.

The dinner was a great success. The guests for the most part were distin-

guished, and Mrs. Latteran in her joy seemed gentler and kinder than usual. Desmond glanced once or twice at St. John with a strange expression in his gray eyes, but the little great man stolidly disregarded him. And when the ladies left the men, as Mrs. Latteran playfully said, to their naughty limericks, the picture was again their gathering place.

"It is very wonderful," a pale actress murmured, gazing at it, "the color . . ."

"Yes, the color is amazing. That is the great secret of sixteenth century Persian art, the colors never change and no one knows how they were achieved." Mrs. Latteran then gave a short résumé of Persian painting, and under her exposition the subject lost every vestige of its charm, as did every subject she touched upon. Suddenly the actress leaned forward.

"Mrs. Latteran, do you know, I find a great resemblance between the women in the picture and you!"

"Nonsense, my dear. I am deplorably Anglo-Saxon."

"Yes," persisted the actress, "but indeed there is a resemblance! Isn't it an extraordinary thing? Don't you see it, Mr. St. John?" she added, as the men joined them.

"I do see it, Miss Atherley. Now that I observe it closely, I quite distinctly see it."

Then ensued a rapid discussion as to whether or not the great Mirak had indeed chosen the then unborn Mrs. Latteran for his inspiration. Mrs. Latteran stood under the picture, denying the resemblance with great vigor, but at the same time doing her utmost to persuade her tightly confined body to take the curves of the very unconfined figures under the orange-trees.

"Well," she declared finally, as the drawing room door opened and a tall thin man came in, "here is Mr. Bryant. He will read the inscription and tell us whether he sees the famous likeness."

"Bryant, the great orientalist," someone murmured.

St. John gave a quiet groan, and

young Desmond drew nearer to him.

"Good Lord," the younger man said, "what shall we do?"

Bryant put on a pair of huge horn spectacles and stared at the picture.

"Is this the—the Mirak?" he asked.

"Yes. Isn't it beautiful? The Persian Ambassador gave it to Mr. Desmond and he most kindly . . ."

"It is a beautiful picture," the great orientalist murmured. Then he glanced round the groups of people and saw St. John.

"Hullo, Sydney," he said, "how are you? Haven't seen you since we were in Bagdad. How are you?" The joy of their meeting seemed to overwhelm the two men, so that they were nearly on the point of forgetting the great question. But to this Bryant was sternly recalled by Mrs. Latteran.

"Now, Mr. St. John," she fluted, "you can't be allowed to monopolise Mr. Bryant. He has come specially to see the Mirak." The pale actress always maintained that at this juncture she heard St. John murmur:

"For God's sake, Bryant . . ."

So Bryant again assumed his great spectacles and minutely examined the painting. Finally he stepped back from it, and turned.

"A delightful picture, Mrs. Latteran," he said, "and remarkably well painted. But I doubt whether it is old."

"Not old! Surely, Mr. Bryant," she returned, reddening, "I need not remind you of the marvelous quality of the Persian colors!"

"No, I think you need not." His courtesy was perfect.

"Abbas Zahrat gave it to Mr. Desmond."

"That may be. It is a beautiful picture. But I am certain it is not old, Mrs. Latteran."

"But, excuse me for being rude," she cried, the red merging into purple, "I really think the Persian Ambassador ought to know."

"Ambassadors," Bryant answered gently, "are not necessarily art experts."

St. John came forward.

"At all events, Mrs. Latteran," he said, "old or new, you have a most beautiful picture, and . . ."

"Please read the inscription," she snapped to Bryant. He bit his lip.

"I—I fear I am a bit rusty in Arabic," he stammered. Miss Atherley rose.

"Don't you see a certain resemblance to Mrs. Latteran in the ladies, Mr. Bryant?" she asked in her pretty lilting voice. "And the lions, too . . . that one to the left—looks like Mr. St. John!"

"Mr. Bryant!" Mrs. Latteran's voice was neither pretty nor lilting, but it silenced everybody. "I asked you here to do me the favor of looking at my Mirak and reading the inscription. Will you kindly read the inscription, if you *can*?" There was a slight pause and then Bryant spoke.

"The inscription is in modern Arabic," he answered. "It seems to be a translation of a bit of—slang. I should rather not read it."

"I insist."

"Very well. It means, 'This is a sublime fake, invented to confuse an infidel to art.'"

No one spoke for a moment.

Then Mrs. Latteran burst forth. "It was you, Mr. Desmond," she cried, "who played this despicable trick on me. It—it was cruel."

The boy flushed scarlet and came towards her, contrition written all over him. She curled her lip in a crooked sneer.

"It was worse than cruel. It was obtaining money under false pretenses!"

"Hush." Sydney St. John laid his hand on her shoulder. "I did it," he said quietly, taking a small envelope from his pocket. "It was my idea. And here is the cheque torn to bits. As a joke, it was of course in the worst possible taste, but there was no question of obtaining money under false pretenses."

A moment later the room was empty, save for the great painter and his victim.

"I did it," he said, "because—because of what you did to Desmond about his portrait of you. I was very angry about that."

She was crying now and something in her tear-stained old face touched him just a little.

"I wanted," he said, less implacably,

"to show you that somebody's paradise is not everybody's paradise."

"Everyone is laughing at me," she moaned, "for I thought it such a great painting." His face hardened.

"A St. John for £500 is a bargain," he said coldly.

Then he left her.



## A FOOL CAROLS TO HIS LADY-LOVE IN AN OFFICE WINDOW

By Grace T. Hallock

**K**EREN, a fool, am I;  
With my bauble of golden daffodils  
I come to the city of window sills  
From behind the shining sky.

Come down the dim, gray stair  
Into the ash-gold street,  
Put dancing shoes on your weary feet,  
Weave flowers in your hair,  
And over the plains of greening rye  
We'll run to the little, silent hills  
That limn the April sky.

The hills are dark with wind  
That will blow about your soul  
And fling you a petalled aureole  
Of hyacinths to bind,  
But beyond the hills and the greening rye  
We'll dance in the rain-wet daffodils  
That rim the April sky.

Ay, marry, a fool am I;  
For once I dreamed that beyond the hills  
She danced with me in the daffodils  
That rim the April sky!



## LIARS' DAY AT THE COUNTRY CLUB

By Frederic P. Ladd

NO golf, of course; snow twelve inches on a level.

Hot Scotch afternoon at the Country Club. Colonel Claiborne had contributed a very fine lie about a charming Paris widow who turned out not to be a widow.

Jack Van Horne had followed with an anti-climax; the heroine was a lady from Kansas City. Nearly everybody looked deucedly bored.

Irving De Puyster, who has just come into his patrimony after waiting eleven years for his mother's divorced husband to accomplish a heart-felt and graceful demise, sipped what was left in his glass, and began to speak, in an earnest, accurate way:

"In contemplating the rose-coloured and important subject of love it is well to realize that though, in general, *Labor omnia Vincit*, yet a gentleman may have his labor for his pains. Or he may not.

"It is not possible that you should know the perfection of promise which characterized a certain brilliant and beautiful experience which once was mine.

"I sat alone one day upon a loggia in faraway Venice, idly watching the sunshine moving slowly, surely, with precise effect around a fluted column. First, the sun touched the leg of a carved Venetian chair; then it crept forward and bathed the chair in its bright light; each imperfection was brought out. Suddenly it dawned upon me that its chiefest imperfection was that it had no occupant. 'Now that chair would be beautiful,' said I to myself, 'if it were graced by some lovely form; how lonely it looks; how improperly bereft.'

I closed my eyes, and I dreamed a little dream. I dreamed that there was a silken rustle in the air—that there was a *frou-frou* of some subtle, gentle, pervasive presence. I seemed to feel that a charming, a delectable fragrance encompassed me. Could it be altogether fancy? It was not. I opened my eyes and beheld—a—no, not merely a lady—a goddess. All goddesses are ladies. Not every lady is a goddess. I comprehended that the vacant chair no longer was vacant. A jeweled belt girdled the perfect waist of the goddess. I raised my eyes modestly, yet bravely, and looked into eyes which responded with a liquid glow. They were dark eyes. I was dazzled, and supremely happy, all in a moment.

"Would you believe it, my friends, if I should declare to you that almost immediately I entered into conversation with Petronella di Ricordi? That is the truth. My knowledge of the Italian language was matched only by the lady's knowledge of English; yet I may say to you in confidence that I instantaneously determined to master that glorious Italian language sufficiently to express myself. As each of us knew a little French, however, we were able to converse before I mastered Italian. Within a half hour I had ascertained that her name was as I have told you, and that she was the very own cousin of the sombre-faced landlord of whom I rented my little apartment. She had come to Venice to visit her relative at that particular moment in the Ages when Fate had granted that I should be upon the enchanting scene.

"Will you allow me to tell you something of Petronella—some of the de-

tails concerning her wonderful self which I may never forget?

"I have spoken of her remarkable eyes. When these eyes looked upon one, one's soul saw myriad lights so scintillant that stars or sun were less mystic and dazzling. Petronella's skin was softer than satin, and delicately tinted with the interesting colour of the roseate dawn. Her lips were like fragrant dew. Her black silken hair was a glorious lure. Her beauty had, in its perfection, something of the symbolic character of the Madonnas of Titian. I particularly recall that her brow was low, and that her eyelashes, when they fell (which was often, in my presence), swept her cheek. I am telling you of but a few of the least of Petronella's charms. Were I to dwell upon the graces of her personality, or upon the marvel of her form, you would at once start for Venice.

"Petronella possessed, on the important subject of love, broad views. Under Petronella's influence, I developed a great taste for gondolas. (I wonder that I ever learned to walk again.) Petronella knew astronomy. She taught me all about a number of stars, in the purple shadows of Venice, as we silently drifted at night in our gondola along the Grand Canal to the music that is heard only in Venice when all the lights are out but those in the sky.

"Possibly you can forgive me when I tell you that one of these nights I kissed Petronella: Petronella would not have forgiven me, if I had not. She was, however, the least bit coy, and appeared to wish me to consider that our kisses were but those of friendship. 'Friendship'? With Petronella! One kiss from those lips was quite enough to kindle a flame of love which all the water of the Grand Canal could not have extinguished. Yet I knew by the sweetness of Petronella's laugh that she sympathized with me deeply.

"Now Petronella had a dog—a remarkable dog. Moustache, a French poodle of extraordinary intelligence, was his mistress' constant companion. One rainy evening, when it was too

wet to drift about in a gondola, I had stayed unusually late in Petronella's apartment. Petronella had been more beautiful and vivacious than ever.

"'Let us,' she said, 'let us play a new game. I have here ze chiffré—ze number—see, on ze leetle carte.' She produced a set of numbers from zero to nine on separate pasteboard cards. 'I place zem so, on ze tapis! And zen I call Moustache.' She placed the cards in a semi-circle on the floor in front of the chair on which I was seated, numbers up, and, opening the door, called the poodle, which came bounding to his mistress' side. 'Moustache,' she said, addressing the dog, 'ce m'sieu sink he love Petronella: how much does he love Petronella?'

"In answer to this, Moustache selected the card marked with the zero. I protested. Petronella only laughed.

"'How many women really truly loved me?' Moustache designated the card marked '1.'

"'With what letter did the name of the only one who really truly loved me begin?' Moustache nosed the card marked '1' into position with the card marked '0' so that they formed the letter 'P.'

"'What was the best age for love?'

"'20.'

"'How old was his mistress?'

"'20.'

"'How many years had she wasted?'

"'20.'

"And so on until I thought the combination of questions and numbers would have no end. 'A well-trained dog,' thought I. I was beginning to understand *ce jeu nouveau*, and had a much better opinion of Moustache, and kissed his mistress enthusiastically. Moustache barked like the devil.

"Finally Petronella said: 'Moustache, for how long, how many years, ees eet zet Petronella shall love her only love?'

"Without hesitation the intelligent Moustache picked 9 8 7—'Petronella,' said I, 'has Moustache ever played zis game before?'

"'Nevaire!' she cried—and kissed me



with a passionate devotion which told me we had passed beyond the bounds of mere Friendship . . . At last, Petronella loved me! We were very happy."

\* \* \*

Our raconteur became silent, lost in thought. The wintry wind whistled without.

"Did Petronella's love last 987 years?" Claiborne finally asked.

De Puyster smiled oddly. "The week following this remarkable exhibition of intelligence by Moustache, Petronella met an American millionaire; and he met Moustache. The millionaire made love to Petronella. That was a matter of course. But I have always had the satisfaction of knowing that Petronella did not take him at all seriously. She married him."



## HALLS

By Owen Hatteras

IT was a night of a thousand stars.

And in the palace of Haroun-al-Raschid was revelry and delight. In the great and golden hall of the palace, lit with torches and silver lamps, men drank and sang, women danced, and a hundred musicians made music with viols and tambourines, trumpets and tympanums. And Haroun the Caliph sat on his gilded throne in the white glare of it all, nodding like an owl.

One came to him, threading among the throng, and whispered into his ear.

"A holy man in the garden?" asked Haroun the Caliph. "Alone? And on this night of revelry? Order him to come in that he may partake of the feasting."

And by-and-by the servant returned, saying, "He will not come in."

"Strange," said the Caliph. "What manner of man might he be?"

"He is like the quiet and sombre men of the hill-country," said the servant, "and he will not come in."

Then an impulse seized Haroun-al-Raschid, who was ever a creature of whim. And he arose from his throne and stalked out of the great hall, brilliant with torches and silver lamps and the eyes of women, and penetrated the garden.

The holy man sat on his haunches near the base of an olive tree, peering at the sky,—a gaunt man with lean hand and a beard of the whiteness of milk which touched upon the ground.

"You are lonely here, old father," said Haroun-al-Raschid, "and there is revelry within. The great hall echoes with mirth, yet you are lonely here. Why will you not come in?"

The holy man smiled with a slight quivering of his long gray beard.

"And why should I desire to sit in the hall of Haroun-al-Raschid, in the golden hall of his palace that is lit with torches and silver lamps," he said, "I, who sit with God in the Hall of a Thousand Stars?"



IT is as hard for a woman to forget her love affairs as it is for a man to remember his.

# NOTES FROM A DAY-BOOK

By Owen Hatteras

1. Romeo in his cups in a public taproom, boasting of his conquest of Juliet. . . .
2. Fame and shame: their difference: that between *ff.* and *sh-h-h-h!*
3. How much do you love me I love you to the last full measure of devotion. And where is the proof of it? I am willing to marry you.
4. I believe that the first movement of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony is worth the souls of all the heathen in Africa. . . .
5. What a difference between the advertisements and the goods! Consider, for example, Belgian hares. Or Belgian poets!
6. The aim of law is not to protect the strong in the enjoyment of their property, but to protect the weak in the enjoyment of theirs. This is why all weak and botched men—*i. e.*, all democrats—are such ardent believers in law.
7. A *salon* is impossible in America, not because we cannot produce a Mme. Récamier, but because our country is too prosperous. Here even a genius gets enough to eat, and so it is quite impossible to lure him into society with a glass of bad punch and a plate of ham sandwiches.



## JOHN-A-DREAMS

By Morris Gilbert

I CAN make a nightingale  
Out of brown paper,  
I can make a purple cloud  
From the kettle's vapor—  
And light a penny candle  
To be a moon behind it  
And let it shine o' nights  
Where I can find it.

Rumplestiltskin's rage  
Will crack the floor again;  
The Third and Youngest Son  
Will come into his reign—  
O, all for me the ragged elves  
Will dance their nimblest caper,  
What with a penny candle  
And some brown paper.

# SUCH A CHARMING YOUNG MAN

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By Zoë Akins

## CHARACTERS:

LEONTINE

MARGARET

HUBERT

GERALD

A WONDERFUL-LOOKING WOMAN

PHILANDER HICKS

JONES

A WAITER

A PAGE

**S**CENE: In a shallow balcony, overlooking the main floor of a fashionable restaurant, there are two secluded tables, a little distance from each other, near the railing. Beyond is the lighted abyss over the restaurant below, and farther off the opposite wall, brightly indefinite. Music is playing somewhere, softly, in the distance. At one of these balcony tables, Margaret, Leontine, and Hubert are finishing their coffee, with liqueurs and cigarettes, as they casually watch the people below. All three are very fashionable, well-got-up young people, with attractive voices and engagingly bad manners. A fourth chair is empty and asserts the disagreeable fact that an expected guest has failed to arrive. A benign waiter flits, now and then, along the background, and only emerges at the proper moments.

LEONTINE:

(Looking off over restaurant.)

I say! Isn't that my husband?

MARGARET:

Where?

LEONTINE:

There.

MARGARET:

There?

LEONTINE:

Yes. Isn't that Ned . . . with a very pretty girl?

HUBERT:

She's a peach!

MARGARET:

Yes, it is Ned.

LEONTINE:

(Staring through her lorgnette.)

What a very pretty girl! I wonder who she is? They're going.

MARGARET:

Ned sees you. You always put him out by staring so, Leontine. Why do you do it?

LEONTINE:

I love to stare. I always stare.

(She watches the departure of the invisible pair.)

MARGARET:

..(Also looking off, as Leontine's attention comes back to the cigarette that she is lighting.)

Do you see that wonderful-looking creature?

(*Leontine and Hubert both are instantly alert.*)

LEONTINE:

Where?

HUBERT:

I see her; trying to find a table.

MARGARET:

She wouldn't have one in the middle.

LEONTINE:

How thrilling she looks! Now why can't Ned pick out that sort?

MARGARET:

You know you'd be jealous.

LEONTINE:

I might—of the clothes. But I love being jealous. I love being made unhappy. I love sensations.

HUBERT:

Ever go to a dentist?

MARGARET:

(*Margaret shivers.*)

Oh! I know what you mean! The drilly grindy thing.

LEONTINE:

(*Coolly.*)

I rather like it. The thing I don't like is that the dentist looks into your mouth. It seems an impertinence. I wish Gerald would come. He is such a charming young man.

(*A little pause during which they listen to the beating of the music.*)

HUBERT:

I can't keep still. Come on, Margaret.

MARGARET:

No, thanks.

HUBERT:

Want to try it, Leontine?

LEONTINE:

Not now. Did Gerald say he'd be here?

HUBERT:

At one-thirty.

(*Hubert rises and takes a turn or two by himself. The music stops sharply, leaving him directly back of Leontine.*)

(*Pulling out his watch and showing her the time.*)

Want to wait?

MARGARET:

(*With a touch of indignation.*)

Of course!

(*Hubert goes back to his seat.*)

HUBERT:

It's twenty minutes after three.

LEONTINE:

Gerald is never on time.

MARGARET:

He always has an excuse.

LEONTINE:

Yes, Gerald's excuses are wonderful. I love imagination.

HUBERT:

Gerald mixes you up so.

(*The Waiter is leading the way to the next table.*)

(*Continuing.*)

You always refuse to believe him, and then find out that he has told you the truth.

(*The Wonderful-looking Woman now appears, following the Waiter. Margaret touches Leonine's hand.*)

MARGARET:

My dear! There's that wonderful-looking creature!

(*The Wonderful-looking One now advances to the table where the Waiter has pulled out a chair. She speaks to him as if giving some instruction. He bows and immediately goes out after placing a third chair at her table. Leontine, Hubert and Margaret are watching curiously and now begin to discuss her with only slightly lowered voices.*)

LEONTINE:

Very, very good; her things, you know.

HUBERT:

What eyes! What dignity! It is dignity—isn't it, Leo?

(*The Wonderful-looking Woman has the manner of one used to attention and indifferent to it. She rests her palm*

*in her hand and stares dreamily at nothing.)*

MARGARET:

Do you suppose those are real pearls?

LEONTINE:

I wonder who she is?

HUBERT:

She must be French.

MARGARET:

More Italian—or Spanish.

LEONTINE:

No—Russian. I'd love talking to her.  
*(Gerald enters suddenly and swiftly, as if he has come from very far away in a very desperate hurry.)*

GERALD:

*(Singing out.)*

Hello!

MARGARET:

Here's Gerald!

*(He is at their table now, bowing and smiling and speaking and listening all at the same time.)*

GERALD:

Hello, hello! Think I wasn't coming, Baggie! Looking fine, Leo!

MARGARET, LEONTINE, HUBERT:

*(Speaking together and almost at the same time he does.)*

Hello! *Why are you so late?*

GERALD:

*(Blithely, charmingly.)*

I'm so sorry. Such extraordinary things happened.

LEONTINE:

Make your tales short, Gerald.

GERALD:

*(Still standing.)*

But really—now you won't believe me—

MARGARET:

Go on.

GERALD:

My valet died!

HUBERT:

Good! That's a new one.

LEONTINE:

I'll have my maid go off with apoplexy sometime.

MARGARET:

Sit down, Gerald.

*(Gerald looks at her gratefully and drops into his chair. He continues energetically.)*

GERALD:

But really—the old fellow didn't come when I rang—and—and—it sort of does me up to talk about it—but he was dead—on the floor—by the telephone—with a pair of my trousers in his hand and a smile on his lips. . . . I had to stop, of course, to attend to things. . . . It was apoplexy; Leo.

*(Hubert laughs heartily; Leontine wickedly.)*

LEONTINE:

I thought it was.

MARGARET:

Is it really true—

GERALD:

*(Gravely but triumphantly.)*

I assure you that it is.

LEONTINE:

Did that make you two hours late, Gerald?

GERALD:

Oh, some other things happened, too. I sent for the doctor, and got the janitor up—he was the one who assured me that it was apoplexy, Leo—and telephoned for my office boy. Jim's a smart lad—buys wedding presents, packs my mother off to Europe, goes to the bank for me, and all that. So I left him in charge, and started here. . . . Then—

LEONTINE:

Yes—

GERALD:

And then I got chased by bears!

MARGARET:

Bears!

HUBERT:

Wall Street—or the zoo?

GERALD:

But really—this actually happened. . . . I saw a girl I know turning into the stage door of a vaudeville theater. She's a nice little thing; her mother was killed by a taxi last week; so I thought I would go in and tell her how sorry I was; but my man took hours to get me up to the curb—traffic laws, you know—so she'd gone in a good deal ahead of me. "This is funny," I said to myself when I got inside, "there's no one around to give a dollar to." An act was on so I thought I'd take a look at the stage. It was bears. Now I don't know how it happened—but suddenly there was a lot of yelling and shouting—and a wild dago-looking woman with a whip and a red and gold short dress—like a brass-band uniform, you know—came tearing off the stage screaming and swearing— And then I saw that she was after some bears! And the bears were after me!

MARGARET, LEONTINE, HUBERT:

(*In chorus.*)

Oh, Gerald!

What next?

Go on! What happened?

GERALD:

(*Impressively.*)

Next—I got out! But as I shot through the door one big brown fellow shot with me.

(*He pauses and then continues in a less animated manner, as if slightly bored.*)

I was a trifle annoyed—for my man had moved up, and I didn't see a policeman around to arrest the bear. So I ran.

MARGARET and LEONTINE:

Ran?

Really?

HUBERT:

Some work, wasn't it, Gerald?

GERALD:

(*Again animated.*)

And then in due time I got out of breath. Also in due time I realized that I was taking the bear away from the dago lady. Bears cost money, you

know. So I turned and, Heaven knows why I did it—but I took off my hat and bowed—just bowed, like this—to the bear! And what do you think that bear did?

MARGARET, LEONTINE, HUBERT:

(*Together.*)

What?

GERALD:

It bowed back!

(*There is a chorus of exclamations, in protest, but Gerald continues with emphasis.*)

Yes, really! And then it came, just as nicely as you please, and took my arm, and together we walked back to the theater with the crowd at our heels. . . . The dago lady was so glad to see us that she stopped having hysterics, and would you believe it?—I couldn't keep her from kissing me?

(*He pauses expectantly.*)

LEONTINE:

And then you looked at your watch and found that it was twenty minutes after three.

GERALD:

No—my dear Leo, no! But really, I looked at my watch and found—that it had stopped. And then I looked around for my man. And then a queer old chap, a wild-west sort, you know—only mild and sweet and tame—came up and asked to shake hands with me. He'd watched me come back with the bear. He was perfectly absurd about it really—and said that he didn't suppose I'd take a drink with him? And what do you suppose that this splendid old chap did?

LEONTINE:

That's up to you!

(*The Waiter enters with a tray on which there are two cocktails. He serves one to the Wonderful-looking Woman and then stands at attention near the service table.*)

GERALD:

But really—it's extraordinary! He found out all about me, and how I owed money to everybody in New



York, and how my mother got me into Old Bagby's office and cut me down to nothing, absolutely nothing—except a hundred a month, and what I can *make*! So this dear old chap promised to give me a gold mine!

LEONTINE:

And then you looked at your watch?

GERALD:

But really—no! He looked at his and said that he had to meet an old friend in five minutes. It was quite romantic. They had come over from England in the steerage together, to grow up and be president, you know, and all that. The other boy wasn't such a sticker and went back to England while my chap went West to grow up with the country. But in time the quitter came back to America, and they are going to meet again after all the years.

*(Hubert, less interested, now lights another cigarette. Leontine appears to be becoming bored. Margaret is still attentive, however, and to her Gerald finishes his tale, earnestly, as if he knows he is not believed.)*

GERALD:

The quitter has a daughter who's rich, you see—and she's already backed my mine—our mine—with twenty thousand dollars—not much, but it was enough to buy spades and things to dig with and put us in a position to sell stock to get money enough to buy some more spades and dig some more, and get the gold out. See? Anybody want to buy any shares? Where's the waiter? I'm hungry.

HUBERT:

He's been flitting around. There he is.

*(The waiter comes at a signal. Hubert turns to Gerald.)*

What'll you have?

LEONTINE:

After your adventure with big game in the wilds of New York?

MARGARET:

*(Looking at a menu card.)*

Bear steak?

GERALD:

I couldn't really. That bear was such a perfect gentleman that I'd feel like a cannibal. Let's sec.

THE WAITER:

*(Helpfully.)*

Something light for breakfast, Mr. Gerald?

GERALD:

Breakfast? This is luncheon, to-day, Alphonse. Fix me up.

THE WAITER:

Very good, sir.

*(He at once produces the extra cocktail and sets it before Gerald.)*

GERALD:

How delightful of you, Alphonse!

THE WAITER:

Thank you, sir.

*(He goes away importantly.)*

MARGARET:

All the waiters and policemen know you, don't they, Gerald?

GERALD:

They ought, Maggie.

I wonder *why* it is so impressive?

GERALD:

Will your father let me marry you when my gold-mine makes me rich, Maggie?

LEONTINE:

Haven't you rather a long waiting-list of girls you are going to marry when you get rich, Gerald?

GERALD:

No longer than yours, Leo—of men you are going to marry when you get divorced.

LEONTINE:

Well, they're perfectly safe—all of them, on both our lists.

MARGARET:

I don't want to be safe. I want to marry Gerald.

GERALD:

That's nice. We'd elope to-day if I

were as rich as Hubert. . . I say, Hubert, you've got a lot of money. Why don't you buy some stock in our gold-mine? Great opportunity. Want to take a chance?

HUBERT:

*(With a mock-serious air.)*

What is your Wild Westerner's name?

GERALD:

I've got all the details right here. Just wait.

*(He produces a dainty notebook, bound in gold, and with some difficulty finds the place.)*

Hicks. Philander Hicks. He told me to call him Uncle Phil.

HUBERT:

What is the name of the mine?

GERALD:

The Bessie Jones. It's named after the old friend's daughter who gave Uncle Phil the money to get it going.

HUBERT:

Where is it located?

GERALD:

Now! Isn't that careless of me! I forgot to ask. But it's some place out West. Where bears live. A bear tried to kill Uncle Phil once. That is why he was so drawn to me.

*(The Waiter serves Gerald, proudly.)*

GERALD:

Very good, Alphonse!

THE WAITER:

Thank you, sir.

GERALD:

*(As the Waiter returns to the service table.)*

Waiters have wonderful memories. I think they ought to be actors. Now Alphonse would do aristocratic old roués or archbishops to perfection. And he never forgets a thing—not even my bean-soup.

*(Margaret has pulled two red petals from a rose in the vase and holds them in her mouth so that they look like the lips of a Japanese woman. She draws*

*up her eyes, slant-wise, with her fingers, and leans towards Gerald.)*

MARGARET:

Look!

*(She turns to Hubert and Leontine in turn.)*

HUBERT:

Adorable, Maggie!

GERALD:

Very, very fetching.

LEONTINE:

You've done that trick so often, dear, but it is quaint.

*(The music again, alluring and swift. Hubert sways in his chair.)*

HUBERT:

Please, Leo.

LEONTINE:

If you insist.

*(Hubert rises and meets Leontine, and together they dance a swift, graceful and charming variation of the one-step.)*

*(The Wonderful-looking Woman has signaled the Waiter who goes to her as the dance begins. She obviously tells him that she will wait no longer and to serve her at once.)*

*(Gerald eats hungrily. Margaret watches the dance, slightly amused as Leontine and Hubert abandon themselves to its romance.)*

*(The amused expression on Margaret's face changes suddenly into something wistful and stern as she turns back to Gerald, and sits watching him.)*

*(A turn in their dance brings Leo and Hubert to the railing; they recognize friends off stage, wave, signal, etc., and then dance off to join them.)*

*(The music grows softer, and presently stops.)*

*(Presently Gerald perceives the growing rigidity in Margaret's attitude and looks up, a little concerned, but as usual, blythe and cheerful.)*

GERALD:

What's the matter, Maggie? Cross?

MARGARET:

*(With quick feeling.)*  
I should say so! Our engagement is broken.

GERALD:

You're cross with me, really?

MARGARET:

Yes.

GERALD:

Why? Being late? But really—

MARGARET:

I'm cross about a lot of things.  
*(As he smiles she heatedly piles up her accusations.)*

I'm cross because you are trivial—and erratic—and irresponsible—and careless—and indolent—and an idler—and a flirt, and a—and a—

*(She pauses. Her gravity only amuses Gerald.)*

GERALD:

*(Apologetically.)*  
I'm so sorry. What can we do about it?

MARGARET:

You don't want to marry me anyway.

GERALD:

I'd love to—but—  
*(He pauses and takes his last spoonful of soup; and then regards her with suddenly troubled eyes. He speaks generously.)*

But—by George! You're half-right. I'm really no good.

MARGARET:

*(Slightly touched.)*  
You are amusing—and you are a dear.

GERALD:

But I can't let you marry me just because I am amusing and a dear, can I? It wouldn't be right.

MARGARET:

Right or wrong, I've decided not to do it.

GERALD:

I am charming. I am attractive. People like me. I am lucky. I am sym-

pathetic. But these are not things I can go and tell your father, are they?

MARGARET:

It's because you don't really love me—

GERALD:

I do! Don't accuse yourself of not being loved by me, Maggie.

MARGARET:

If you did you would understand how I feel—about lots of things.

GERALD:

But it isn't my fault that your father won't let me come to his house, is it? And was I to blame because your mother and mine had a quarrel at the dog-show.

MARGARET:

Very well; we won't talk about it. Of course there's no money so it's foolish to keep on like this, isn't it, Gerald?

GERALD:

But I am going to make money, Maggie. Just wait!

MARGARET:

I'm afraid, I'm not the sort to "just wait" all my life. I'm tired already. You make me too unhappy. You are never serious; you never telephone—except when I am out; you put off—or break—every engagement we make, or spoil it by being late. . . . I have to pretend to everyone that I don't mind. . . . And, of course, you make love to every other woman.

GERALD:

That's all perfectly true, my darling. I am spoiled; I admit that. But I have never told any other woman that I love her. I make them think it; but I never come right out and say so—like I do to you—like this—

*(He catches her hands and speaks solemnly and tenderly.)*

Maggie, I love you; and I don't love anybody else, and I never have, and I never will. . . . There! Isn't that enough? What more can any woman want?

MARGARET:

That would be quite enough, my dear, if it meant anything to you. I think I'd wait for you forever if you showed that you really wanted me by—

*(She hesitates.)*

GERALD:

*(Suspiciously.)*

By what? Come out with it, Maggie.

MARGARET:

By working—just a little.

GERALD:

By working! I do work!

MARGARET:

You go to an office for an hour, now and then—

GERALD:

Now, Maggie—you women don't know a thing about work. I've mentioned half-a-dozen good things to Old Bagby, but he never takes my advice. An investment company that won't invest makes me tired. Now just to show you that I always have business on my mind I'll tell you what happened on my way here. I saw Old Bagby coming out of the subway. "By George," I said to myself, "Old Bagby ought to invest in our mine!" So I got out of my taxi, stopped Old Bagby and took him back to where I'd left Uncle Phil waiting for his old friend. . . . Now, just suppose that the Bagby Investment Company buys one hundred thousand dollars' worth of stock—I get ten thousand—commission—besides the interest in the mine that Uncle Phil is going to give me. And when I get twenty-five thousand I'll marry you, Maggie, honestly.

MARGARET:

*(Wearily.)*

I'm a little tired of nonsense at serious moments, Gerald. I care more for you than I hope I'll ever care for any human being again. . . . But—I'm going to marry someone else.

GERALD:

You're going to marry someone else! That's silly!

MARGARET:

I said to myself, this morning, quite firmly, "You've been out four years. You are tired of quarreling with your family about Gerald; you are tired of pretending to everybody that you are not ready to marry yet—and you are getting a little tired of him. You are a fool if you don't do something about it. You are a fool if you don't marry Howard Dillon." Just then Hubert telephoned that you'd asked us to luncheon. At half-past one, promptly. Then I called you to ask you to make it two, because I had a fitting at one. You said no, and asked me to be half an hour early so that we could talk before the others came. You asked me, particularly, to wear the flowers that you were sending. Of course they never came. That didn't make any difference. . . . But I *was* half an hour early. I was giving you your last chance. Now I am going to marry Howard.

GERALD:

*(At a loss for words; sincerely troubled.)*

I—I—I can't seem to say anything—  
*(He breaks off. There is a brief pause. Then he begins inconsequentially, relieved at finding something else to speak of.)*

It's funny about those flowers. He said that he might not get his *fresh* violets in time, and, of course, I wanted fresh ones for you—particularly. So I told him to send them here if he couldn't deliver them to the house in time. . . . I'll tell him—

MARGARET:

*(Coldly.)*

The flowers didn't matter. I'm sorry that I mentioned them.

GERALD:

Then you're done with me?

MARGARET:

Yes.

GERALD:

You won't wait?

MARGARET:

It's hopeless to wait.

GERALD:  
There's my gold-mine!

MARGARET:  
How absurd!

GERALD:  
You know, you are the one woman in the world that I never expected to have throw me down.

MARGARET:  
I shouldn't call it that.

GERALD:  
Howard Dillon is nothing but a lucky, red-faced—

MARGARET:  
We won't talk about him.

GERALD:  
I never did like him. . . . Anyway, Maggie, I did try to get here at one. You know I did! I told you what extraordinary things happened.

MARGARET:  
Why do you insist upon those impossible excuses at a moment like this?

GERALD:  
But they are true! Honestly, Maggie.

*(The music is playing again, a theatrically soft and sad waltz. . . . Also the Waiter is returning.)*

MARGARET:  
You can't expect me to believe them, can you, Gerald?

GERALD:  
*(Drooping.)*  
I suppose they do sound fishy. But if I could prove—

*(The Waiter serves Gerald proudly. Gerald looks at the entrée placed before him and shakes his head pathetically.)*

GERALD:  
Thanks, Alphonse. But take it away. I've lost my appetite.

*(The Waiter, who perceives some trouble in the air, is sympathetic.)*

THE WAITER:  
Yes, sir; presently, perhaps, Mr. Gerald.

*(The Waiter goes off with rejected dish. The pause that follows is filled with the music and regret.)*

MARGARET:  
*(Touched at last, her voice suddenly tender.)*

Gerald—I don't believe a word of your excuses, but I do love you; I love you so much that I'll wait another month—if you want me to—before I tell Howard that I'll marry him.

GERALD:  
Will you, really, my darling?  
*(He takes her hands impetuously.)*

MARGARET:  
If you will keep just half our engagements, on time—telephone every morning before twelve, and go to your office for at least three hours a day.

GERALD:  
Gracious, Maggie! Why don't you ask me to stop smoking and drinking, and all the rest of it? You women always want to make loving you a bore.

MARGARET:  
*(Hurt.)*  
Of course, if you don't want to—

GERALD:  
But I promise! Oh, I promise alright!  
*(The Waiter enters to serve the Wonderful-looking Woman.)*

Now let's dance so that I can hug you. We've been awfully serious.  
*(They arise and he puts his arm about her just as the music stops. Hubert and Leontine come back and join them.)*

LEONTINE:  
We went to speak to the newlyweds.  
GERALD and MARGARET:

Where; really?  
*(All four chatter an instant and then take their seats again. The Waiter has served the Wonderful-looking Woman and stands at attention.)*

LEONTINE:  
*(Looking at the Wonderful-looking Woman.)*  
She's decided not to wait.

HUBERT:

Do you know I believe that I'm in love with her.

GERALD:

Whom are you talking about?

LEONTINE:

That wonderful-looking woman at the next table.

GERALD:

Where?

*(As he turns to her, the Wonderful-looking Woman gives him a swift, radiant smile and nod. He bows, dazed. The others are interested.)*

GERALD:

*(Turning around again.)*

Now where did I meet her?

LEONTINE:

Introduce us.

HUBERT:

Ask her to join us.

MARGARET:

You know her?

GERALD:

She seems to know me—and I'm sure I've seen her before—but I've no idea—

HUBERT:

Oh, come, one does not forget a face like that!

LEONTINE:

She is certainly somebody.

*(Again they focus their attention on the Wonderful-looking Woman in time to see her eating—WITH HER KNIFE! The effect is dramatic!)*

MARGARET:

Evidently—she's eating with her knife.

LEONTINE:

Then she is certainly somebody—or nobody.

MARGARET:

Yes, but which?

LEONTINE:

Barbaric nobility, I should say.

HUBERT:

From the Balkan States, perhaps.

MARGARET:

*(A little ironically.)*

Can't you remember where you met her, Gerald?

*(Again the Woman smiles insistently at Gerald.)*

GERALD:

By George! Pardon me a minute. I've got to get this thing settled.

*(He rises and advances with a bow to the lovely stranger.)*

GERALD:

*(With a world of charming diffidence.)*

How do you do? May I sit down a minute?

THE WOMAN:

*(In a hearty, deep voice slightly accented by Cockney.)*

Sure! If you don't mind me eating. I don't take any lunch until after my act.

*(She proceeds with her food, although she regretfully lays down her knife and eats more primly and properly with a fork. Gerald eyes her helplessly.)*

THE WOMAN:

*(After a little pause.)*

Say, you certainly was a sport—to bring back my bear! I thought I'd lost old Brownie for good.

*(A glad light dawns on Gerald's face.)*

GERALD:

My dear Madame—?

*(He pauses, asking her name.)*

THE WOMAN:

*(Assisting him, setting him straight.)*

Countess. I still go by the name of my husband before last,—Countess Sitkawa.

GERALD:

My dear Countess, I want to ask if I may introduce my friends?

THE WOMAN:

Oh, sure!

*(Gerald rises just in time to meet*



*two rather old men who are approaching timidly, directed by the waiter.)*

GERALD:

Great Scott! Jones! Aren't you dead?

JONES:

*(Apologetically.)*

So they thought, Mr. Gerald—begging your pardon for putting you out, sir; but your office-boy fixed me all right, sir; it was only a little fainting spell at hearing from an old friend, sir.

GERALD:

And my Uncle Phil! By George! I've got it! You're Uncle Phil's old friend, Jones,—and our partner in the gold-mine!

JONES:

Yes, sir.

GERALD:

*(Perceiving the direction of their glances.)*

Do you know the Countess Sitkawa?

JONES:

She's my daughter, sir.

THE WOMAN:

*(Speaking across at them.)*

Come and sit down, Pappa.

JONES:

Yes, Bessie.

GERALD:

*(With delight.)*

She's the Bessie Jones!

HICKS:

*(Looking at Gerald fondly, and speaking to Jones.)*

And this is the young gentleman whom I met with the bear.

JONES:

I thought it must be him when he told me, Hicks.

GERALD:

And it was your daughter's bear, Jones! Just think!

*(He moves them towards the Countess' table.)*

JONES:

We're very much honored, sir.

THE WOMAN:

Sit down, everybody; let's eat!

GERALD:

*(Tactfully.)*

Let us sit down, my dear partners.

JONES:

Begging your pardon, sir.

*(They sit.)*

BESSIE:

Well, what about your gold mine, Uncle Phil?

HICKS:

You don't have to put up no more money, Bessie. We've just sold a fourth interest to a rich man that this young gentleman introduced me to not more than an hour ago.

GERALD:

What!

HICKS:

*(To Gerald.)*

Yes; and he wanted more. But I told him that one-fourth belonged to my old friend, Jones, and his daughter Bessie, and the other half to me and you, being as I'd taken a great fancy to you, and meant to do you a kind turn.

GERALD:

But—

HICKS:

It comes out that this fellow's company knew our property already, and had been trying to locate the owner for weeks. So he took Jones and I right along to a hotel where he was going to eat dinner with his lawyer—and here's his check.

*(He produces a check.)*

GERALD:

*(Taking it.)*

Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars! Old Bagby's check for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars!

BESSIE:

You don't say!

HICKS:

Sight of money, ain't it? *(To Gerald.)* You get twenty-five thousand

out of this to-day, young man,—regular commission. We're much obliged.  
(*Gerald rises. He is quite subdued.*)

GERALD:

Wait a minute, Uncle Phil.

(*He goes back toward his friends.*)

Maggie, come here.

(*He remains standing; Margaret rises and joins him. Leontine and Hubert look up. . . . The Waiter consults with Hicks and Jones. The Countess eats.*)

LEONTINE:

(*To Gerald.*)

Who is she?

GERALD:

(*Triumphantly.*)

My friend, the Countess Sitkawa.

LEONTINE:

Bring her to tea, will you, sometime?

GERALD:

Perhaps.

(*Leontine's attention now returns to Hubert. Margaret and Gerald move midway between the tables. His air is important.*)

I can prove it all now, Maggie,—by this check. It's old Bagby's. And

that's Uncle Phil, over there,—and that's Jones, my dead valet, who is his old friend,—and she's the bear-woman, and Jones' daughter, too! Just think! And I get twenty-five thousand dollars out of this to-day! And after a while we'll have millions from our gold mine! Now do you believe me, Maggie,—and promise never, never, never to doubt me again?

(*Margaret looks at him with adoring, wondering eyes. They are very close together, and as they stand, happy and for the instant mute, they are somewhat disturbed by an impertinent page, who enters jauntily, several bundles, etc., in his hands,—singing out a name that no one can possibly understand. Gerald flags the youngster humorously.*)

GERALD:

Boy! Are you calling Sitkawa or Jones?

(*The boy grins knowingly and produces a box.*)

GERALD:

And here are your flowers, Maggie!  
(*The Page cannot quite believe that it is really a twenty-dollar bill that the young man hands him so carelessly, and for once his blasé manner changes into a whistle of surprise as—*

(THE CURTAIN FALLS.)



## LINES FOR MUSIC

By Robert Merkle

MY heart-strings quiver with song.  
They quiver like wisps of spider-web  
In a thin wind,  
Like slender blades of grass  
In the early morning,  
They quiver wistfully  
To a delicate, strange tune  
Like the eye-lashes of a young girl  
Looking upon a man.

# THE PUNCH OBSTREPEROUS

By Sidney Beauclaire

I HAD been up at Litchfield with Charley Boynton for three solid months—that is, since the middle of April—loafing and inviting my soul. By the middle of June it seemed to me that I felt more like my normal self than I had in the age-long two-and-a-half years since Felicia Henderson and I had broken our engagement.

I am in the habit of taking a vacation, now and then, but not for a very extended period, and this one for various reasons promised to be the last for a considerable time.

I began my career as a playwright by writing comedies, and most of them during the seven or eight years that I was engaged in turning them out, proved quite successful. But after I broke with Felicia my sense of humor departed with tragic and soul-terrifying abruptness. I discovered I couldn't—not even if it had been a matter of expiating all my mortal sins—devise an amusing situation or evolve a humorous character or barb a line with even a semblance of wit. In addition to the burden of depression naturally engendered by the unhappy consummation of a love affair that had bloomed with such radiant promise, I was haunted by the colossal prospect of failure in my profession. I gradually developed a state of mind that was simply indescribable. A friend—a very kind friend in whom I confided—suggested that I try my hand at something else, and in desperation I took to writing melodramas. The first was an out-and-out failure, the next a fair success, and the third—"The Eleventh Hour" (which you all remember) a decided success.

Directly after this bit of good fortune I learned of Felicia's engagement to that little whelp, Eddie Farr, the illustrator. "Anyone but that rake!" said everybody, and—oh, God!—I could have voiced the sentiment from the housetops. The news plunged me into a slough of despond from which I did not emerge for several months, during which time I found it quite impossible to muster the necessary mental stamina for any sustained effort. But gradually, with the kind aid of Charley Boynton and Jimmy Wheelock and other good friends, I came out of it, and that fall wrote "The Danger," which, I am sure everyone will agree, was an unequivocal success.

I have a predilection for spending money—a predilection for spending it indiscriminately and indiscreetly—out of the sheer joy of doing what I can, in my limited way, to quicken the economic pulse and add to the gayety of nations; and as a consequence my exchequer is in a constant state of depletion.

It had—at the time of which I speak—reached a perilously low ebb, and Necessity—which I have good reason to believe is the mother of some of our very best little plays and novels—drove me out of Litchfield and back to hot, noisy New York and the melancholy contemplation of the keys of my Underwood. That's all I did—contemplate them in hopeless and abject despondency for upwards of three weeks. At the end of the first week I had neither a finger nail, a shred of self-confidence, nor an interest in life left.

I had fallen upon one of those periods of sterility, which every author

experiences some time or other, and which very often come at a time when one is in the possession of perfect serenity of mind. (My affair with Felicia was not troubling me then.)

Oh, fatuous mortals who envy the successful novelist and playwright—you can't begin to have the faintest conception of the difficulties and vexations (mainly psychological) which conspire to make their existence anything but joyous, and compared with which the problems of the average individual are transparently simple and petty. No one who has not actually experienced one of these periods of mental vacuity—and even one who has and whose professional reputation is not dependent upon a consistent flow of ideas—can begin to realize the exquisite anguish one endures while they last. Ideas are a writer's stock in trade and without them—well, he might just as well try his hand at plumbing.

Some writers have peculiarly fantastic and novel methods of bestirring their sluggish minds into activity. I know a playwright who got two ideas—which he was later able to develop into very successful plays—while he was spending his vacation in Hawaii. Therefore, when one of these barren periods came upon him, he must needs hie himself out to the islands, confident that the magic environment would present him with the necessary idea. It did. I know another chap whose best ideas have come to him while he was taking a bath. Accordingly he had a bathroom built just off his study, and time and again I have called to find him seated complacently in the tub awaiting the inspiration which was certain to come.

My idea for "The Danger" (which, by the way, was one of the best plays I ever wrote) came to me while I was riding on a train between New York and Albany. I think it came to me just south of Poughkeepsie. I have never been quite certain. I am what psychologists call a "place-thinker"—that is, every thought or idea I have uncon-

sciously—or rather automatically—associates itself indissolubly with a mental picture of the place, the location, or some person or prominent object in the environment where it first comes to mind. Whenever I think of "The Danger," or the idea upon which it is founded, or, in fact, anything connected with it, a windmill and a haystack loom up in the background. I therefore spent four precious days traveling to and fro between New York and Albany, painstakingly scanning the countryside, hoping against hope that some felicitous grouping of rural phenomena might again have the power to evoke an idea of promise—of even fair promise. Any old idea would have done! Nothing came of the effort. I performed every known rite in the Distressed Author's Liturgy—all to no avail. I grew frantic—desperate.

One afternoon my good old pal, Jimmy Wheelock, came around, and I hysterically laid my case before him.

"I'll take you out and buy you a good dinner," said Jimmy, "and we'll talk it all over."

So down to the Salon de Luxe we pranced that evening. The Salon de Luxe is one of those metropolitan eating establishments where the gastronomic processes are aided in triumphing over an epicurean quality of food by luxurious surroundings and a brand of histrionic entertainment that sometimes borders on the bacchanalian.

We were bowed and smiled to a table on the far side of the room. The place was vibrant with life and color. But the smiling ease or animation of those about me irritated me. I wanted to get up and hammer them on the heads. I pulled my chair around and sat with my face to the wall when the girls came out in their abbreviated nightgown costumes and went through a wiggle-dance. I let Jimmy do the ordering. I had no appetite. I had had no appetite for days.

At a table just across from ours sat Harry Dodd—with a slip of a girl

frightfully daubed with rouge. Harry was the man who introduced me to the game of kelly-pool, thereby adding another element of tragedy to a life already sadly overburdened with it. Jimmy said little but appeared to be making a tremendous effort preparatory to saying something of importance. In the midst of the fish course—I think we had been discussing, in a desultory way, some phase of my malady, and I believe I had expressed the ardent wish that my parents had had the good sense to apprentice me to a blacksmith—when my eyes chanced to wander across the room and rest upon a girl who sat with a group on the right-hand side of the room—as you came in—just a table or two this side of the orchestra balcony. Her back was to me, but instantly I recognized the plaited golden hair, the Marie Antoinette poise of the head—and the silvery laugh. There was only one like it in all the world!

"Felicia!" I exclaimed breathlessly to Jimmy, and inclined my head in the direction of the group.

"Well, I'll be dinged!" he blurted.

Her companions were two men and a girl. The man on her left I recognized as Eddie Farr—a small, insignificant, sandy-haired fellow of about thirty-five, with a cherubic face. The other man I did not know. He was large and heavy-set and dark and had a rumbling bass voice that carried halfway across the room. He grinned asininely at everything that was said. The other girl was Hattie Clisby—a dumpy little brunette with a small pinched little face. She always reminded me of a fat terrier.

"Eddie Farr!" muttered Jimmy.

"A fine specimen of manhood!" I sneered.

It seemed a rather remarkable coincidence that on the night of all nights when I least wished to see Felicia we should both be dining in the same café. But we playwrights—even if the critics don't—realize that life is full of just such little coincidence ironies as this.

Jimmy knew how deeply sensitive I was concerning my relations with Felicia, and he remained discreetly silent—eating with slow, engrossed meditation. My mind literally seethed.

Felicia, I could see, was in one of her rare moods. How she scintillated! Every little gesture, every little movement, every little intonation of her glorious voice that reached me recalled those sacred hours and days and months of our heavenly courtship. Had she—could she—have forgotten me so soon?

Felicia's conversation is always brilliant, and I have never met her equal when it comes to turning a cunning quip. When she is in form she can keep a whole table in an uproar for a solid evening. Eddie lolled over the table and gazed up at her with an expression of utter, supine adoration—it was so superlatively supine and fatuous that it struck me as being an affectation. I could have gone over and killed him without turning a hair. Presently they all got up and filed out, and Jimmy and I bent low over our plates so they wouldn't see us.

We ate in profound silence for some time afterward. Suddenly I stopped in the act of transporting a mouthful of food to my mouth, and gave a sort of mellifluous howl that caused people at nearby tables to turn and stare in open-mouthed wonder.

I had an idea!

Actually an idea!

Eureka!

This was such an astounding bit of good fortune—and it came at such an opportune moment to make the reaction all the more decided—that Felicia was momentarily put out of mind and a mood of hysterical joy took possession of me. After all I had my art—I could still pursue it—and the pursuing of it was, in the last analysis, the paramount thing in life!

Jimmy, himself, is something of a genius, and is quite familiar with the eccentricities of genius, and he merely leaned back in his chair and regarded

me with a quizzical, engaging smile. But though a latitudinarian in this respect, he has certain very definite ideas as to how far a genius may go in outraging the proprieties, and when, a moment later, I attempted to embrace our waiter, he bounced from his chair and extricated the embarrassed fellow from my encircling grasp and dragged me to the street. Our exit had created considerable excitement, and Jimmy was wrathful when we got outside. He pulled me into the shadows of a doorway and demanded imperiously, "What in the devil's the matter with you?"

"Jimmy—an idea—I have an idea!" I babbled.

He gazed down at me steadily for a moment or two, then a beatific smile played over his face, and laying a fatherly hand on my shoulder he said, "That's splendid! Congratulations! It took something like this to release those pent-up faculties of yours. I forgive you, old spitzbub."

## II

ONLY a true novelist or playwright could appreciate my ebullition.

For family reasons I think the less said about our subsequent activities on that memorable evening the better.

I knew positively that Eddie Farr was an unconscionable brute. The revelations concerning his character which came out at the trial when his first wife was divorcing him were shocking and should have warned all women against him. But there is something about the primitive in a man that has a morbid fascination for most women.

My idea centered mainly around the dramatization of Eddie Farr's diabolical nature. The idea came to me in the shape of the "punch"—or big situation.

Briefly put, it was this:—Devoted, loving, self-sacrificing, self-effacing, worshipful wife of a man who is the very incarnation of brutality. The man has the faculty for acquiring money in

large amounts. (He had to be a millionaire, of course.) Husband, yielding with graceful ease to dramatic necessity, becomes afflicted with an incurable disease, the chief symptom of which is a paroxysm of coughing which recurs at frequent intervals. Doctor warns wife that someone must always be on hand to give him a draught of a certain solution or terrible and agonizing death will immediately result. Old lover comes back into her life. She is gradually roused from her state of abject servility. Aversion for husband insensibly develops. Eventually turns to out-and-out loathing. Husband continues to grow more intolerably cruel and overbearing. *Then the "punch"!* One day—just after her former lover (once again discreetly ardent) had paid her a visit—the woman and her husband are alone. After a particularly savage outburst on his part he is suddenly taken with one of these fits of coughing. Woman starts toward table to get solution—halts—deliberates (registering in rapid succession murderous intent, ghastly fear, implacable hate and then iron resolve). Husband, gasping, implores her to hurry. She darts impulsively to table, grabs up bottle containing solution, rushes to window and tosses it out. Then she stands transfixed with horror, watching him writhe through all of the tortures of an agonizing and terrible death!

Wasn't that a corker? Do you wonder at my desire to embrace the waiter?

I worked out a rough draft of the scene and rushed around to see Johnson, a leading New York manager. He listened patiently while I read it to him and said that the idea appealed to him, but declined to undertake its production on the ground that he had more things under way at the time than he could properly look after. I left him rather piqued and hurried over to see Charley Giddings. Phil welcomed me in his usual hearty, jovial way. Though he was in the midst of preparations for a big musical comedy pro-



duction he insisted upon my sitting down and reading the scene to him. He got out a box of fifty-cent perfectos and before I was well started the room was thick with celestial smoke. He listened with polite interest to the end.

"Well?" I queried eagerly, when I had finished.

He pondered deeply for a moment.

"Very interesting—ve-ry interesting," he said abstractedly.

"You want it then?" I inquired, doing my best to conceal my excitement.

"Why—er—yes, I guess so," he said tentatively.

"I believe I've really got an idea, Mr. Giddings," I urged with enthusiasm.

"There is an element of novelty about it," he observed, still pondering.

"That's exactly what I've been digging for," I exclaimed.

"What are you goin' to call it?" he asked.

"How about 'The Murderess'? That's something that ought to make them sit up and take notice."

He frowned.

"I dunno," he ventured at length; "that's pretty strong meat."

"Strong meat is what they want! I don't believe you can get it *too* strong! They want plays either so sweet they can taste them or so strong they can smell them!"

He ended up by calling his stenographer and dictating a contract, a very liberal contract, quite the most liberal anyone had ever given me.

As I joined the crowds on Broadway the world seemed star-hung with promise. My imagination was aflame. I saw myself again hailed, from far and near, as the dramatist of the hour.

### III

For the next few weeks I worked with the vigor that assured success inspires. I hardly ventured out of the house. I denied myself to everyone. The mist-hung, serrated vistas of upper Manhattan and the multitudinous

roar of the city and its thousand and one summer odors are, too, inextricably associated with that mentally tumultuous and ominous period.

After four weeks of uninterrupted labor, my mind grew rather sluggish. I decided I needed a change, so I threw a few things in a suit-case and ran up to Lake Placid.

Almost the first person I bumped into on the veranda of the hotel on the morning after my arrival was Felicia. Imagine! We met face-to-face near one of the doors and for a second or two we both seemed intent upon instant escape, but her haggard and distraught expression gave me a decided shock and I lingered momentarily out of involuntary curiosity. She presented really a very pathetic picture.

"How do you do?" she quavered, after what seemed to me an interminable interval.

She looked as though she had been ill and was just convalescing.

"Er—lovely weather," I commented, gazing out across the sun-drenched sweep of lake and hill and valley.

"Er—delightful," she returned.

"Up for a few days?" I queried with a fatuous attempt at nonchalance.

"Yes," she said and bit her lip.

Then, with an embarrassed "I hope I'll see you again," she turned and entered the door.

That evening I packed my suit-case and left for New York. I was experiencing enough difficulty as it was in concentrating upon my work, and with Felicia in the same hotel—or even in its vicinity—I felt I should be quite unable to do myself justice. On the subway going up from the Grand Central to Ninety-first Street I met Lloyd Pennypacker, son of old Gordon Pennypacker, the big steel man.

"Say," said Lloyd, with a conspiratorial, half-apologetic air, after we had exchanged greetings, "I suppose you've heard about Felicia and Eddie Farr."

"Heard what?" I snapped. These attempts on the part of would-be friends to interest themselves in an af-

fair which concerned only Felicia and myself I regarded as unwarranted presumptions.

"Why, it's been broken off!" said he.

The dour mood which had settled upon me as the result of my chance contact with Felicia was instantaneously dissipated and the world became an elysium where nightingales sang and all the odors of Araby mingled to subjugate the senses. Before we reached Ninety-first street I had got off all manner of banal jokes and had whacked Lloyd on the back twenty-seven times and told him he was the best old sport in the world and invited him to come over to the club on the first afternoon he had free and we'd play kelly pool till dawn.

#### IV

ONCE I was settled at home again I began to have no end of difficulty with my play. It had gone rather badly from the first. I couldn't visualize my characters as clearly as one should if one hopes to make them genuine and lifelike and compelling. The big situation was there—all worked out to a mechanical nicety—but the characters refused absolutely to become creatures of flesh and blood. It had seemed to me just before I left for Lake Placid that they were losing some of their manifest woodenness, but now when I took them in hand again they became mere puling manikins. I found it next to impossible to make the man convincingly tyrannical and brutal. He ranted away in one key. No matter how prodigiously I labored I couldn't for the life of me invest his character with any variety or color. He didn't give me any imaginative thrills. Unless a character thrills you imaginatively—whether he be good or bad—so that you soar, as it were, creatively and his moods become yours and you can feel out a situation with some degree of accuracy, you might just as well close up your typewriter and go out to the ball game.

Now, as I believe I have said, Eddie Farr had a facial ensemble that utterly belied his villainous nature. It was disarmingly angelic—seraphically engaging to the uninitiated. Largely, I think, because of the peculiarities of my mind—particularly my ingrained instinct of place and object thinking—the face of some friend or acquaintance or some face seen in the crowd, especially if strikingly typical or markedly individualistic, very often—not always—identifies itself for the time being with a character with which I am having difficulty. The facial characteristics are generally radically modified, if not entirely changed, before the character is completely evolved—continually merging, shaping and rearranging themselves under imaginative impetus to conform to or approach the growing conception. It's an expedient my mind employs to aid in the visualizing process.

I discovered after some time that the man whose face rose persistently before me when I was occupied in developing this Frankenstein of cruelty was the face of Arthur Simpson—a member of my club. I did not know him very well. In fact I only had a speaking acquaintance with him and knew scarcely anything at all about him.

It seems to me that if the Infinite Intelligence had been properly on the job he would have soon discovered his blunder and effected a hasty transposition of countenances, giving Arthur's to Eddie and Eddie's to Arthur, thus leaving the general public in no doubt as to Eddie's iniquitous propensities and disposing of certain unwarranted misgivings regarding Arthur's irreproachable character. I am, in common with most other mortals, obsessed by the obvious to a regrettable extent, and personal appearance carries vastly more weight with me than it reasonably should—and I had taken Arthur at face value, without even going to the trouble of making casual inquiry, and judged him to be a first-class

scoundrel, which unfortunately he was not.

One rainy, soggy, depressing afternoon I knocked off work early and went over to the club. The place was deadly dull. A funeral atmosphere enveloped it. As I passed the bulletin board I discovered that my name was posted for two hundred and fifty dollars. It sent cold chills down my back. I ducked into the library, settled down in a chair and gave myself up to a melancholy capitulation of my manifold difficulties. Presently I became vaguely aware that someone had entered the room. I looked up and beheld Arthur Simpson standing a few feet from me, attempting to smile ingratiatingly with that face which so utterly belied any kindlier sentiment or feeling.

"My dear Mr. Duryea," he said, "pardon the presumption, but I understand you are a devotee of kelly pool. One or two of us are just beginning a game. Would you care to join?"

I think I should have accepted the invitation even if it had been tendered by Eddie Farr. I was ready to do anything which held out the slightest promise of ridding me of the mood which had settled itself upon me. Ah, and then, too, here was an opportunity to study Simpson at close range!

Kelly pool is one of those games for which I have a penchant amounting almost to a passion. It has always had an inexplicable fascination for me, and yet, in the years that I had played up to this time no one could have possibly experienced a worse run of luck. Invariably my ball is one of the first killed and I could have counted the jackpots I had won on the fingers of my two hands. Yet, here, before I knew it, on this blessed afternoon I seemed to have come under the smiling dominion of the Goddess of Fortune, and the game existed for me and for me only. Each ball seemed to be miraculously endowed with a conscious being and subtle prescience all its own and responded with uncanny readiness to my every secret wish and command. When

I took up my cue there was my ball waiting obediently before a pocket—ready to be picked off by a soft shot. Jackpot after jackpot I won! Pat Holliday and Al Gouding threw down their cues in disgust after an hour's play.

But Arthur courteously remained. We played on until it grew dark. When we finally stopped I bought a pocket full of the best cigars in the place and did my utmost to console him. He had, really, taken his drubbing very much to heart. We must have talked for hours. I found him as ingenuous, kindly disposed and open and above board as anyone could possibly be.

## V

WITH this visualizing guide-post summarily knocked in the head, the slender hold my imagination had upon my principal character became the merest thread. Only a phantom outline of his always shadowy self was left. Of course, I was buoyed somewhat by the thought that Felicia had had the good sense to break off with Eddie, and yet most of the time I was intolerably harassed by the play. Pauperism loomed large before me! My nerves began to get jumpy. I decided I had been keeping too much to myself. I therefore began to go out just a little more than I had been.

I accepted an invitation from the Wallaces to attend a week-end party at their country home just outside of Irvington. My emotions may be in some measure imagined when I learned upon my arrival that Felicia was to be one of the guests—in fact, that she was already there. She and Vivian Wallace have been bosom friends since they were youngsters, and I have always had the suspicion that Vivian invited us there in the express hope that this brief sojourn together might pave the way for a renewal of our old relations. Foxy Vivian!

Felicia and I were naturally somewhat constrained in our bearing toward

each other at the outset, but when two people are so innately spiritually and mentally *en rapport* as we were, the subtle, compelling influences of propinquity are very likely to speedily break down the barriers of any forced or artificial reserve. We found ourselves on the second day—all unconsciously—falling into the little familiar intimacies of speech and manner that had characterized our former relations. In accordance with General Vivian's ingenious scheme of strategy we were shunted off into the library on the evening of the day before we left and allowed to remain there unmolested far into the night. We sat on a big settee before the great quaint old fireplace and talked for a long, long time of everything, it seemed, except the thing we most wanted to talk about. But eventually we found the courage to broach it. Our tones and manner grew gently propitiatory—self-accusatory—and we reviewed everything from the standpoint of some celestial judge who was bent upon rendering a judgment that would stand the test of the ages. She confessed, now, with touching frankness that the slights of which she had accused me had been mere wilful fancies on her part, and sobbingly begged my forgiveness. Bless her heart, I could have crushed her in my arms then and there. I didn't though—well, because I somehow felt it would have been a bit too previous.

Felicia was leaving the next day to spend several weeks with some friends in Stockbridge. I took an early train for New York in a state of supreme exaltation. When I got home I found a letter from Giddings urging me to give him the play as soon as possible. He expressed the firm conviction that my work would be up to its usual high standard and that I would not disappoint him in the matter of an early delivery of the 'script. I guiltily consigned the letter to the waste basket. For quite a while I had been heartless enough to call and give him encouraging accounts of my progress. Just

now I didn't want to see or think of him until my mind was in a more settled state with regard to the play. I instructed the telephone operator in our apartment house to tell everyone who called up that I was out of town.

Three days later the call of the country became too great to withstand and I ran up to Stockbridge and put up at "The Red Lion." In the mornings I worked but—needless to say—the afternoons I spent with Felicia.

What glorious days those were! There were hours and hours on the golf links, long tramps over the hills—several to the crest of Old Baldy to watch the sunset—motor trips to Lenox and Great Barrington and Pittsfield, any number of wonderful horseback rides up and down the valley, cosy little dinners at "The Red Lion"—and in the evenings long, long tête-à-têtes under the pergola at the Ritchies'—or if it was too cool to be outdoors we adjourned to the great library and kept a late vigil before the fireplace.

In my pleasant, sunny little room at the Inn the characters of my play began to rise, like phoenixes, out of the ashes of their dead selves, and assume guises that rendered them all but unrecognizable. They radiated good cheer, vivacity and wholesomeness, and to save my soul from perdition I couldn't see them in any but the most amusing situations. The husband's face, it seemed to me, had become a composite of Joe Beecroft's and Reggie Stanhope's—two or the most accomplished and engaging fun-makers at the club. He literally bubbled over with mischief and good humor—and while he gave his wife some occasion for doubting his fidelity, and annoyed her tremendously by outlandish pranks, he was, on the whole, a devoted husband and fond father. My play (Dod gast me!) was rapidly and inevitably developing into a comedy!

## VI

ONE morning along in the second week of September I received a tele-

gram from Giddings (I never learned how he got my address) which read, "Send along the 'script. Am ready to begin rehearsals."

I hardly knew what to do. I had only completed one act. After some deliberation I wrote out a synopsis of the other two, and mailed it and the act to Giddings with an explanatory note to the effect that the play was likely, on the whole, to be *somewhat different* from what I had originally planned it should be.

The following afternoon I received a telegram from him which read, "What in the name of all dachshunds do you mean by sending me a *comedy*? Come to New York at once."

I left that night for New York. Bright and early the next morning I presented myself at Giddings' office with fear and trembling. I was immediately ushered into his private suite.

He jumped at me like an infuriated bull, brandishing the act and the synopsis wildly in the air.

"What in Pittsburg do you mean by sendin' me this?" he bellowed.

"I—er—I couldn't do anything with the punch idea," I said feebly. "Er—so I turned it into a comedy."

"Couldn't *do* anything—!" He glared at me as though meditating instant murder. "Why didn't you tell me? I trusted you! You've been de-

pendable enough *before!*" he shouted.

"Er—certain—unforeseen psychological difficulties arose—" I explained huskily.

"Psycho—! Psychological difficulties be damned!" he cried.

"I kept thinking I might be able to do something with it—"

"Kept thinking! Kept thinking! Come here—and just look at the mess you've got me into!" he yelled as he dragged me to the window.

As I gazed out it seemed to me that the whole circumbient atmosphere was filled with huge flamboyant signs which read "The Murderess," by Stephen Duryea. Opens at The Showhouse Monday, April tenth."

Almost every billboard in the vicinity—and I could have sworn there were a thousand—proclaimed this to the world.

"The whole town is billed like that!" screamed the frenzied Giddings.

I escaped from the office as quickly as I could.

## VII

THE comedy was later produced. It was an instantaneous failure. Directly afterward I borrowed a thousand dollars from Jimmy Wheelock and Felicia and I spent our honeymoon looking for a thirty-five dollar flat. Believe me, old dear, good ones at that price are scarce in New York!



## GHOSTS

By John Kerr

OUT of the twilight her face steals upon me paler than thin snow.—Out of the mist of my dreams paler than moonlight on shadowy water.—Out of the fumes of my pipe she floats up to my lips paler than smoke.

On the bare hills she haunts me paler than wind. I cannot abide the garden because she is there paler than a white rose with dew on it.

Women's faces! Somehow these old, old memories are always pale as if they were dead.



## DOWN THE AVENUE

By H. Stanley Haskins

**V**ANITY is the iridescent plumage of youth. Who shall forget one's roving eye of adolescence, looking to the right, to the left, even upward to high heaven for approbation? Miss Red Cheeks trips down the Avenue. Mr. Broad Shoulders sees her coming. He throws back his head, arches his bulging chest, and seeks her averted eyes for—what? To ascertain their color? To study the soul behind them? Fifty times, no! Instead, he is hunting for a tribute, a swift appraising glance, a wondering survey of his erect carriage; his buoyant step, his budding moustache. He is ravenous for the rich food of approval with which to fatten his young and happy conceit.

Weren't we all once Mr. Broad Shoulders, wonderfully blessed with an overweening idea of ourselves? Oh, the unforgotten thrill of it! The magic by which each breath became an intoxicating beverage, every heartbeat a synchroism of health and self-confidence!

Along comes Schoolmaster Experience with coat-tails flapping about his lean legs—impatient of the egotist, unrelenting to the opinionated, ruthless toward the proud. Under his sobering instruction the eyes of others cease to appeal to us as mirrors for our perfections. No more we turn the agile eye toward potential audiences. Surely the years destroy a great asset under the pretence of improvement. So that the world may not suspect the collapse within us we draw the mantel of pretence about our shivering shoulders. We bustle and bluff and strive to make ourselves and others believe that all is very well with us and most satisfactory, thank you!

But beneath the bumptious exterior lie pallid ashes; burned out coals of youthful conceit. We are older and wiser, maybe, and in less trouble than in gone years, but oh, to be Mr. Broad Shoulders again, swinging down the Avenue!



**W**HEN you are kissing a girl, she is wondering when she will see you again. You frequently are wondering when you can go home.



**A** WOMAN always dreams her dream with one man and realizes it with another.



**A** FAMILY:—a group of non-producers with a common source of income.



# NITCHY

By Maud W. Beamish

WHEN Phil Moran's wife was granted a divorce he didn't even know the name of the lawyer who represented her. But his whole body and soul were seared with the horrible, cabalistic name of Nitchy, which she had hurled at him without ceasing during the three lugubrious years they had lived together.

Mrs. Moran was a woman of intellect, though Phil didn't discover it until after their marriage. She was well read, and knew all the unpleasant things that philosophers have said about men, women and one another. Phil, of course, had picked up a few neat sayings himself. He could retort "You know me, Al," and "For the love o' Mike" with real histrionic fervor, but they never registered when Mrs. Phil started a tirade about Nitchy or some other such literary bugaboo.

The name of Nitchy irritated Phil more than anything else in the world. From the first he felt that this nut, as he put it, was going to make a difference in his life. And he was right. It was after a battle lasting all day, in which his wife put over a knockout in the form of one of Nitchy's cheerful little tid-bits, that he left home and stayed away for good.

Phil always swore that no living man could get his goat, and so he felt some relief when he found that it was a dead one who had put it over on him.

"You can't buck up against philosophers for any length of time and live," he said. "Mame was all right, but she was lopsided with intellect. She never said what she herself thought about

anything. It was always what had been said by one of those guys with a sour soul. It was me or Nitchy, and Nitchy won out."

So when Mrs. Phil entered suit for divorce, Phil heaved a sigh of relief, and even laughed at the idea of getting rid of Nitchy forever.

"Believe me," he said, "a plain, common, ordinary co-respondent is a cinch compared to a home-breaker like Friend Nitch."

After the divorce he went out West, where he hoped that philosophers, like grand opera, were unknown. He swore, too, that he'd never fall for another woman. But he did. Two years later he met a little stenographer from Montana in the office where he had a desk. He became cautious as soon as he found her mixed up with his dreams at night. "Suppose," he said to himself, "that she has a line of quotations too? Mame never let out any of the stuff until after she got me. I'll look before I leap this time, all right—right."

But she took all the paces like a thoroughbred, and he found her as simple and wholesome as she was pretty. One day, however, she threw an awful scare into him. Offhanded like, she mentioned Mary McLane. Not caring for other girls, he said, "I don't know the dame." He was thinking how corkingly her hair curled at the nape of her neck.

"Why, don't you know?—she wrote that famous book—"

The curl made a fade away.

"Ha, ha!" he cried, with his fingers

crossed; "book, eh?" and nodding his head with compressed lips, "Good-night, fair maid!" he said, and left her.

The next day he felt very rocky. He had put in an awful night, for the curl had kept coming back, no matter how he turned, and he knew he was up against a serious love. But he meant to win out. It seemed as if Nitchy was standing beside him all day, twiddling his fingers and laughing like the devil he was. But Phil wasn't going to let in another home ran. So he just froze the whole office.

The girl from Montana wasn't from the West for nothing. She refused to icyfy. She knew something was wrong and she meant to find out. So she just hung around. Two days later she was leaning on his desk, humming as she polished her nails. He didn't pay any attention to her, or show that he knew she was there, until—

"My," she said, "I must be going to see a friend. My hand's that itchy."

Phil caught only the last word. He leaped from his seat and glowered down at her.

"Nitchy? Did I hear you say Nitchy?" he thundered.

She looked at him in astonishment. "Gee, what would I say Nitchy for? I'm not so English that I stick letters where they ain't wanted."

"And you positively didn't say Nitchy?"

"Surest thing you know. Say, what is this Nitchy, anyhow?"

"Don't you know?" he shrieked, "honest to Gawd?"

He gripped her shoulders tightly.

"Nope," she answered, and he could see that she was honest. "Never heard

of it. Is it a disease or a dance?"

Phil's heart took a leap to the right side of his body, then came back and settled down for life.

"Neither," he told her. "It's a man. In fact, he is the man who caused my divorce. He's what you might call a mental correspondent."

"Is that so?" said the girl from Montana.

"U-huh." Then he grew grave. "But say, what was all that Mary McLane gaff you were throwing? Do you read books, or poetry, or—or anything?"

She squirmed. "N-no. Not exactly. I just heard of her living out Montana way."

"But why *me*? Why spring it on *me*?"

He wanted and yet feared to know the truth.

She looked at him squarely.

"I might 'a' known you'd call my bluff," her mouth trembled. "I knew you was educated and I thought you cared for books and such like. So I pretended I knew something, too. But I'll be honest with you, Phil. The only book I ever read from soup to nuts was 'Three Weeks.'"

If tears hadn't flooded her eyes just then she could have seen how glad he looked.

"Do you mean it, kid?" he asked, with that softness that makes a woman's heart beat fast—if she cares.

"U-huh."

And then—well, and then they were married.

And happy? Say!

And happy? Say! They have a dog named Nitchy!



**H**ONESTY in woman is the cleverest of all her tricks, for it is the only trick that even the cleverest man does not foresee.



## THE NEW WOMAN

By Lilith Benda

TWO men were crossing Washington square. One, short of stature, fiery-eyed, addressed the other:

"Several years ago, Willard, when I was walking here, I saw in the distance an Italian immigrant girl flitting along with all the lissome grace of a Botticelli nymph. To get a closer view, I hurried toward her. She was cross-eyed. And, then and there, I recognized in her an epitome of the very spirit of Washington Square. Seeing it for the first time, a-shimmer with moonlight, with Judson's cross shining like a constellation mysteriously suspended from the heavens, one is duly impressed. A group comes swinging along, the men in corduroy suits, green fedoras, flowing ties, the women with bobbed hair and eccentric clothes, and in their mirths one thinks to see a courageous outbreak from conventionality, the spirit of a new-world Bohemia without quotation marks. Acclimation follows—and disgust. The Rudolfs and Musettas brand themselves as jiteney epigrammatists, their romance squalid, drab, maculate under its masquerade, like the women's bobbed hair under its dye, their 'new sins' but low forms of disorderly conduct in any high court of the gods,—passion interpreted in terms of platitudinous paradox. And Judson's cross, no longer a constellation hanging from the sky, becomes but a cluster of electric lights propped up on a building like an illusion on crutches, a jaded theory, a great conviction half laughed out of existence,—or a moribund ideal."

While he was speaking, a little woman passed them, paused an instant, and finding them engrossed, hurried on,

with a disappointed look in her big, gray eyes,—hurried on to a furnished room in an old-fashioned house, where in a niche in the wall, a little image of the Blessed Virgin stood. Without much show of reverence, she took it in her arms, fondled it as does a little girl her doll, and whispered:

"Our Lady of Pity, in the mercy of your heart, hear my prayer, and intercede. I want to meet those two men. They were good to look at, weren't they now? And the one . . . you know which—he had such eyes." . . .

Meanwhile, in the street, the two continued their conversation.

"My dear Louis," the second spoke, a tall, slender man with chilly but arresting grey eyes, with a haughty air and proud face which evoked simultaneous images of a young Jesuit and a Spanish grandee. "Sometimes you are liable to poetic extravagances. Having inherited a house in the section, so well laid out that I don't care to part with it, I can't but attempt a justification of the old square. And, in fairness, one must admit, among the exasperating oddities who inhabit here, many with an elusive grain of genuineness in their get up, and many who are Philistines through no fault of their own, pitiable victims of a nyctalopia which permits of vision only in the tempered, murky light of fallacious culture."

The two went on, and, together with the gleam of a winter's moon, the glowing electric bulbs threw an atmosphere acrid and sweet over the old square, like the taste of a pungent cocktail, a cocktail concocted from a dash of outré banality, a bit of estimable common-

placeness, and a goodly measure of divine nectar, moonshine liquor immune to plebification, lawlessly distilled and gratuitously served to all who, as they cross the park in the still hours of the night, feel a little of the haunting sweetness and awful mystery of life. Boy workers in sweatshops dreaming, with heads held high, of controlling cloak-and-suit syndicates, their aspirations as vague, if lower, their conquests as thrilling, if less noble, as those which floated like hazy nebulae before Louis Wainwright's and Willard Mallory's eyes, have felt it. In the tremulous sound of a woman's laughter, too, in the subdued note of a man's whisper, the spirit of romance occasionally permeates the place. While, of all bonds the strongest, most enduring, most profound,—and rarest as well, a friendship between man and man sometimes flourishes there, as that between Wainwright and Mallory flourished, before Aniela Moravska appeared. Over it all, like a brooding spirit, protective and mocking as well, the cross shines.

Upon a base of identical views concerning life, wines, art and women, the friendship between the two men was firmly established. Mallory, far too rich and lazy to develop the latent creative faculty within him, but none the less a litterateur and savant, as well as a gourmet, dandy, and ascetic libertine, had discovered in the obscure young poet's works just the qualities which strongly attracted him. At once a modern and a classicist, wielding Alexandrines, *vers libre*, or blank verse with equal ease, Wainwright conquered new paths with material gleaned from beaten ones. Despite a tang of the rococo, a faint odor of the salon, Mallory sensed in the flowing plastic lines a remoteness, an aloofness, an ataraxia, something of the dispassionateness of a bronze which, together with the poet's convulsive energy and rapturous lyrism, enabled him unerringly to hit upon a note of the sublime.

And when, upon meeting him, Mallory found him, for all the poetic appendages of fine features, excessive

pallor, raven locks and flashing eyes, to be a gently cynical idealist, half a stoic, half a sybarite, with a predilection for faultless grooming and dainty women, their friendship grew apace. Both looked at a potential sweetheart's finger-nails and wrists before they looked into her eyes; both required her trimly shod, elegantly coiffed, slender, and low-voiced; both took women very seriously, almost as seriously as the cut of a cut; both loved literature greatly, painting half-heartedly, and music, as the mother of all the arts, younger and more beautiful than any of her offspring, with unrestrained abandon. For five years they had been boon comrades in dependency, in joy, in sickness, in success.

Late one night, soon after, the two again crossed the square, and of a sudden, Wainwright stopped, waving his arm at the cross which glimmered through a heavy fog.

"Look, Willard,"—his voice was somewhat high-pitched, febrile, as abrupt and uncertain as his gestures—"I wonder if there's anything significant in that sign palpitating through the mist like some cruelly wounded creature, unwilling, perhaps afraid to die. Who was it that spoke of the body of a young girl found during the Renaissance in a pagan tomb, as perfectly preserved, and so beautiful that Christian pilgrims came in flocks to worship at her shrine? It was something about the attitude of the Renaissance toward paganism, about the reconciliation between Catholicism and antiquity. Now, all that sign stands for is outworn,—practically dead. And I wonder whether some new awakening is about to come, and whether it will be tinged as unmistakably with the spirit of Christianity as was that other with the spirit of the antique world."

In striking contrast to the poet's voice, when Mallory answered it was in tones even and low, giving the effect of a chisel in a master's hand:

"Pater sums up that whole idea in his consideration of Michelangelo. The

Greeks, in their sculpture, by a system of abstraction and detachment, sought always the type in the individual, while he penetrated by a mediæval spirit of introspection, and at the same time aware that a too vivid realism hardens sculpture into caricature, attained intensity of expression by incompleteness, a fraying of surfaces, a roughness of outline, a suggestion rather than a realization of actual form. Leaning upon the Greeks, he built something new.

"A stimulating time to have lived, the Renaissance, I fancy. Art, luxury, comely females, an aristocracy of culture! But I can't help wondering, were there new women, advanced women then? And how were they properly cowed, chastened, put into their place? The advanced woman of to-day is my life's bane. If only she used her new enlightenment to grasp the mighty difference between the sexes, the indisputable inferiority of the female, then possibly we might assume toward her the only attitude we really care to assume, the only attitude for which women really care,—we might look down upon her adoringly. Or if only her exasperating assurance were tempered with a Roman Catholic humility,—for after all, Catholicism is the prototype of all the sects; the rest were but steps in the resolution of a religion into a moral code,—then she might no longer madden and pester to such an unbearable degree. But, no! As she is, she flourishes, and goes even to the point of exerting her pernicious influence over the cuddlesome, brainless little chickens who by right belong to us.

"I recall a certain Florrie, a stenographer, with a mouth comparable to nothing but a dew-dripping Jacqueminot. Absorbed in the idea of free love, by some strange twist of the intelligence she interpreted it as gratuitous devotion, and became quite too boringly holier-than-thou when I suggested a loan. Continued dowdy, mind you, in a drab serge suit when every line of her pretty little figure cried out for Nile greens, corals, heron blues,—for glad, bright colors. Spoilt what might otherwise

have been a very pleasant affair, and all through this bothersome new-woman influence. Excessively annoying, it was."

"And yet,"—as Wainwright spoke they were standing at a crossing and stopped for an instant while a truck-driver led his struggling team over the slippery pavement,—“And yet, Mallory, one must be considerate. As yet, the advanced woman is in a stage of experimentation, she may evolve into something worth while. All art, the very human race even, seems to be in a floundering, stammering state just now. Take Strauss' ‘Zarathustra,’—a failure, but a glorious failure from which something significant is bound to arise. Take Dreiser's ‘Genius,’—not by any means as splendid a failure but nevertheless worthy of great respect. What's wrong with that book, anyhow? It's a big theme, it has the earmarks of greatness. I've an idea that, handled by one of the old boys of the nineteenth century, it might have been a masterpiece. Who could have whipped it into shape? Who—”

“Balzac,” a small, fluttering voice half-whispered, half-piped.

A little woman far shorter even than Wainwright was standing between them. So quietly had she slipped there that, until her speaking called their attention to her, neither had noticed her presence. And, the crossing clear again, they went on, Mallory taking her arm quite as a matter of course, Wainwright, intent upon an idea, continuing eagerly to speak without considering her.

“She's right at that, Willard. Were Balzac alive now, there's exactly the story he'd write. The importance he gave to money, his *heros metallique*, and on the other hand his masterly delineation of the artist type, would have enabled him to fuse the two temperaments, and make Dreiser's hero convincing as no one else could. He'd never have had his young artist stand gaping before a Bouguereau,—it would have been a Cézanne perhaps, or a Renoir. He'd never have had a society



woman renowned for her wit voice any such epigram as 'Life is a battle: the victory goes to the strongest.' He'd never—

He stopped for, glancing at Mallory, he found him regarding with indisputable interest the little figure between them. Big grey eyes, rapt and appealing, looked timidly from one to the other. A head of flaxen hair under a close-fitting toque, rosy, rounded cheeks, and a mouth about which lingered some of the vacant, ambiguous expression of a child, all made her appear about twenty. A cloak of blue plush fashioned on *moyen-age* lines gave her, with its deep, rich coloring so dear to the illuminators of the middle ages, the effect of a little saint stepped out of a mediæval missal. She walked lightly, noiselessly, half flitting, half gliding, and with something besides of the prim trot of a well-bred little girl. Wainwright, justly summing up salient racial traits in the rounded face, thought that she looked as a Dürer Madonna, would look had Dürer been a Slav, while Mallory, taking at their value her blonde daintiness, delicacy of features, and big, sad eyes identified her at once as a Pole.

At his door they stopped, while, not without a slight hesitancy:

"Won't you come in for a while?" he asked.

"But of course," she faltered back, as if faintly astonished at the necessity for an invitation. And together the three entered.

Hung in steel-grey velvet, the coldness of the tint counterbalanced by the warm sheen of the texture, softened by shades of dull rose, and enlivened by bits of color beloved of the synchromists, piercing reds, greens, and oranges, the room they came into was furnished with the unerring selection of a connoisseur. Copper and teakwood appurtenances, typical of second-rate studio life as is mission furniture of Harlem flats, and Bibles distributed by uplift societies of hostelry none too squeamish over baggage requirements, Mallory despised. But, freed from bond-

age to the art of any one period, he had gathered together in delightful harmony, objects of beauty of variant schools and ages. A great fireplace took up most of the wall space on one side, and before it, in an Etruscan arm-chair, her loosened wrap revealing a slim, well-rounded form, with a sort of infantine dignity the woman seated herself.

"You're Polish, of course?" Mallory asked.

She nodded. "Anielka Moravska. Call me Anielka. I like the diminutive."

"You speak practically without a trace of accent," Wainwright put in, "Have you lived here long?"

"I've lived in many lands, and am not a little proud of my linguistic attainments. Few people here know that I'm Polish. Few call me Anielka. To them I'm Angela Moore, and as Angela Moore I'm becoming almost well known,—as a cabaret singer, incidentally. Whenever I begin to become well known anywhere, I run off to some other land. I sing those silly, baby-licentious songs—you know, the innocent stare, the clumsy double meaning. I sing at Ryder's."

They were somewhat taken aback. Ryder's was a café of unsavory repute, conducted on an expensive scale, and catering to the speciously smart.

"Do you like doing it?" Wainwright leaned toward her, interested.

"But very much, or I shouldn't do it. I put the songs over, as they say. I look so young, you see: they're a little shocked when I appear in simple, dark dresses, and this cross of moonstones which I always wear troubles them. Funny old sots grow sentimental, sometimes weepy. They ask that I sing some clean-souled ballad, and then I have to give them 'Mother Machree,' or 'Un Peu d'Amour,' or 'My Little Grey Home in the West.' That's trying, of course, but there are recompenses. They pay me well, and I've been particularly—what do you call it?—flat-busted of late. One is bound occasionally to become flat-busted, when



one conforms to a code which precludes affairs of the bank-book unless they be affairs of the heart as well. I never permit love to interfere with life, but I never permit business to interfere with love."

Her clear, high treble ingratiated the poet. It reminded him a little of lute notes heard in the distance, a little of the faraway crooning of frogs, but especially of wood-pigeons' wings brushing through a leafy forest. And looking at her, he thought of dew-laden anemones, and of periwinkles scattered over a meadow like fragments of a milky sky . . .

Mallory wondered, if he were to run his fingers through her hair, whether it would not feel as soft as the down on a baby chicken's breast.

Both experienced a slight annoyance when she reached over and lit a cigarette. The idea of her smoking seemed not to harmonize with the general effect she was producing. But a moment later, Wainwright saw his friend smile, and sensed a furtive note of gentleness in the chiselled tones as he addressed her:

"You smoke as if you were saying Hail Marys between puffs."

"I often do," she answered. "It relieves the monotony. There are so many of them to say, as well as Our Fathers and Apostles' Creeds. The good priests are severe. My penances are arduous. But what can one do? To be a good Catholic one must sin. All the great saints at first were great sinners. And when I grow tired of love and vagabondage, I, too, shall enter a convent, a Polish convent, and cut off my hair, and don a nun's wimple, and be very, very good. When I grow tired . . . if I grow tired . . . but I'm not tired yet, and may the Lord God Omnipotent grant that the day be long in coming. At present I am content to sin, to repent, to be forgiven. In my room I have a little image of the Blessed Virgin. For her intercession I pray. She's not as rigorous as the fathers. Sometimes, even if the wish be sinful, she grants it. Then I am

happy, and put vases of flowers before her."

"And if the wish be not granted?" Concealing his amusement as unkind, Wainwright left his chair for one closer to her.

"Then I spank my little image," she fluttered; "that's not shocking, is it? Don't you remember slapping your mother's or your nurse's hands, when you were a tot and knew no better? The Blessed Virgin understands. To her, and to the Eternal Father, we are as so many little children. And they're not cross. Sometimes it seems necessary to discipline the Almighty."

Mallory laughed outright. As if hurt, her eyes widened.

"Oh, you will not understand—you people! Religion is not a standard of conduct. Religion is just—religion. It's a glow, an atmosphere, a something beautiful. To me, it means Gothic altars, chasubles in orphrey work, stained glass windows, organ music, chanting, Kyrie eleisons, censers, rosaries, scapulars, pretty little prayer-books, perfume, and color, and comfort, and forgiveness. I believe in it as absolutely as I believed in fairyland when I was little. So few appreciate religion as pure religion. I've met only one in this country. We were going up Fifth Avenue in a taxicab, and passed his church. He didn't doff his hat; he had his arms around me, so of course he didn't doff his hat. The Eternal Father is allwise, all forgiving. He wasn't cross. He understood our pre-occupation. God chuckles oftener than He frowns. That's what no one seems able to understand."

As she stopped speaking, the two men looked at each other. A faint smile played on Mallory's lips. Pre-occupied with the turn of her ankles, he had listened only half attentively to her words. Wainwright's eyes were brighter, his pallor intensified. And as their glances met, for the first time during the years of their intimacy both experienced something in the nature of a slight shock, a faint clash. Surprised, dumbfounded almost, each saw

a trace of hostility on the other's face; each felt a desire to conceal any expression of it in his own. Troubled, they shifted their eyes. To both, their friendship had been the most precious event of their lives. In their beliefs, in their attitude toward life, they had been always as one, and, at times discussing a possible future disagreement, neither had imagined that anything, much less a woman, could loosen the underlying bond. That a flaxen-haired little creature whom they had known only an hour should so quickly have provoked an impalpable, but nevertheless distinct antagonism, struck them as ominous. They were aghast. And, on the instant, both felt an overwhelming desire to be rid of her, to obliterate her, to return at once to the old status which already seemed remote, bittersweet, more like a happy memory than an existing condition. Their eyes were unfriendly as they turned to her again.

Cheeks flushed, eyes become chatoyant, lips tremulous with fleeting smiles which followed one another with each quick-drawn breath, for all her placid poise and clasped hands, she was evidently bubbling over with poorly suppressed excitement. And when she noticed their unsympathetic faces, her lips drooped for a moment, then curled again into a smile at once frightened and conciliatory.

"I'm pestering you. I've been talking too much. You want me to go. But I shan't—I can't. I'm having far too nice a time. It's cozy here, and there's a—*stimmung* about the room. Let me sing for you, let me play, and then you may talk. And don't be cross, please, for I'm happy here."

Across the room she pattered, and, seated at the piano, a tall silver candlestick burning at either side of her, sang to her own accompaniment "Les Dames du Temps Jadis." Evocative of Palestine, of choir-boys, her voice, a high treble, pure, transparent, and irresolute, had a sexless quality. Warm, and in a measure sensuous, there was yet no ardor, nor voluptuousness in it. It

soothed, it caressed, and, under its influence, the men felt entirely at peace with the world and with each other. When she had finished the song she let her fingers run over the keys, drifting into a fragment of Scriabine, then into a little lilting, lulling thing by Debussy, and finished finally with Chopin's seventh prelude. Light and fluent, in her playing they noted an underlying strength, a sadness—the Polish *Zal*.

"You like it?" Over her shoulder she looked timidly at them. "I play so little, and so seldom. You're not pleased, perhaps?"

"It was sweet, Anielka," Wainwright answered. "You play very well. Why so little, and so seldom?"

She extended her hands, tiny hands, very white and dimpled, with long, slender fingers.

"To play well, one must sacrifice one's finger-nails, file them down, you know, into an ugly shape. I'm conceited about my finger-nails. They're quite perfect—you see? And much as I love the piano, I'll not sacrifice them for it."

For several minutes they sat in silence. Then suddenly she rose and faced them, her hands resting lightly on the keyboard behind her, the tall candles flickering at either side of her, the embers in the fireplace casting a dull red glow over them all. Her face became rapt, ecstatic. It was as if she were seeing visions. And her voice tinkled out, remote and sweet as the sound of an angelus bell.

"I am enjoying all this. This room is lovely, and you two are lovely. This last hour will sometime be so cherished a memory. I've many, many beautiful memories! The gardens of the Tuileries, moonlit drives in the Bois de Boulogne, and along the Nevskii Prospekt, Rotten Row, the Aleja Ujazdowska in Warsaw, the park in Chapultepec. The harbor at Rio de Janeiro—the Vienna *kaffeehäuser*. The Lazienki, just outside of Warsaw, where one sits on the shore of a pond, and on a little island across the water, a ballet performs! The forest of Bialowicza in Lithuania, the craggiest wilderness in the world,

where the aurochs roams wild! The Alps around Innsbruck! To stand on a terrace, watch a mad, riotous sunset, cling to a man's arm, and feel the grandeur of humanness in the thought that all that vast, gorgeous splendor must melt away in an hour, while love, so much more enduring, will live through three, perhaps even four, such sunsets! Always with a man! Always with an adept at lovemaking! How I enjoy them all—the Englishman's skilled craftsmanship, the heft and gusto of a German, the technique of a Viennese, a Frenchman's finesse, a Russian's cold abandon, the light, piercing sweetness of a Pole! Love is beautiful, and men are great and splendid, and the world's a cozy little globe—and I'm happy here to-night!"

She stopped abruptly, glanced from one to the other with a quick, furtive look, and began slowly, waveringly to approach them. As, at the fireplace, the three met, her smile died.

"Oh!" In a long sigh arrested halfway by a little sob, her voice fell to a whisper, "Oh, I'm afraid you both are falling in love with me, and I shall fall in love with only one of you. It's too bad!"

With a last, defiant crackle the fire went out. Only the candlelight and a hard, grey ray of dawn peering through the curtains, lit the room. Both men felt embarrassed, ready to laugh, but uneasy as well. She had grown pale, but presently her eyes brightened as emphatically she nodded her head.

"The Eternal Father will see that everything comes out beautifully. We are all too nice to be unhappy. Nobody will be unhappy. He likes us too much for that. You will see."

Decisively refusing all offers of escort, her toque adjusted, her cloak wrapped about her, she nodded her good-byes.

"It's been lovely. I shall come soon again."

The chilly light of an early winter morning filtering through the curtains enhanced the impression of cheerless-

ness which stole over them as she left the room.

Just as on that first evening she had joined them in the street, and accompanied them unhesitatingly as if such proceedings were quite in the order of things, so, as the days went by, it speedily became her established custom to come to the steel-grey room after the restaurant had closed, and smoke, talk, sing and play. With an unwilling avidity they grew to anticipate her visits, for, despite the mollifying blandishment of her demeanor, despite a bearing like a balmy caress impartially apportioned to each, something insidiously sweet had crept between the friends, something which struck them as pleasantly regrettable, of not entirely inauspicious moment, as if not a gulf, but a pond of nenuphars were separating them. The antagonism each had felt that first night never evinced itself again. For an adjustment whereby the tie between them might remain intact even as they included her for a while in their scheme of existence, for a disposal of affairs according to the spirit she herself exhaled, a spirit which proclaimed everything of evanescent allure as not commensurate to the profound, the enduring, which interpreted love, even in its apogee, as exquisite but nugatory, and never of paramount import, both strove—Mallory drifting easily into the attitude, Wainwright finding it distinctly against the grain. For he was beginning to imagine Anielka all-wise, all-noble, as well as lovely. He saw visions; he dreamt dreams of a Cytherea, a *pays de cocagne* of violin music played *pianissim' adoro*, of her face, moonlit and vague, undulating as under a veil, as a midnight zephyr wafted her fair hair across it. Poetic transport, curbed, in his work, by a dominant intellect, poetic nostalgia for the land never seen, the woman never known, began to tug at the leash, and impel him, even as he figuratively kicked himself in the shins for surrendering to it, toward an apotheosization of Anielka. With each sight

of Mallory's tall, slender figure, in such sharp contrast to what he considered his stuntedness; with each suave utterance which emphasized so vividly his own nervous excitability and jerky speech, he found himself nursing a grievance against his friend.

In Mallory's attitude toward Anielka there was no idealization. He found her rather more than amusing—charming, in fact. Between her looks, her voice, her gestures, her sentiments, there was a gracious rapport which pleased. Hers was a dainty, inopulent beauty hinged upon mere prettiness; a type which he admired. When at times she discussed esoteric subjects in the notes of a child's prattle, he was diverted from the context of her discourse, a discourse which, however, when he listened, he found startlingly, alarmingly sane, and in accord with his own ideas. But it was her hair which especially attracted him. Again and again he felt the desire he had felt when first he saw it; again and again his fingers itched to run through the silky mass. Wainwright's ill-concealed ardor annoyed him. Here lay the radices of a pretty amourette. Anielka sometimes seemed responsively to meet the poet's enthusiasm. Why spoil the girl with a frenetically silent appeal of which he himself was incapable? Wainwright was taking an unfair advantage.

Together they went to hear her sing in the cabaret. To Wainwright she seemed like a baby lamb bleating its heart out in a pigsty; to Mallory, like an aristocratic little mushroom among toadstools—of the genus, but purged of feculence. The two views summarized their individual conception of her.

"You are two-thirds mountain peak, Louis, and one-third vine-laden valley," she said once, "while you, Willard, are one-third mountain peak, and two-thirds vine-laden valley. I should like to live on a mountain side, with a church near me, and a casino not too far away. Sometimes I should look up at the snowy summit, and sometimes down into the vineyards below. Both of you, or one of you, would visit me.

I wonder which? I like peaks and valleys."

One night—it was only a month after their first meeting—the two sat in the firelight awaiting her. A snow-storm raged outside. The howling of the wind and rattling of the panes served to accentuate the comfort within. In the atmosphere there was a mellowness conducive to urbanity and good-will. To sit together again without a disturbing element present; to sit, a bottle of sherry between them, they were in a lazy, full-flavored sherry mood; to sit, in negligent postures, their feet up on the empty, Etruscan chair, puffing at cigarettes with no disquieting rustle of women's skirts to divert them; to feel the old *Heiterkeit* renaissant between them—all fostered an unwonted gentleness, a certain demonstrativeness in their manner.

"Louis," Mallory said presently, "let's run off for a while. Let's go on a roaring bat to-morrow, and then down to Aiken for a week or two. The Anielka is very lovely, but she's made us lose our bearings, as it were. You haven't been working, you haven't been thinking of work. You'll get out of your stride. And I've found the past month altogether too fraught with silly suspense. Fancy the two of us coveting a pulchrious female, and like yokels, like striplings, living for weeks in a state of infinite expectation, ready at any moment to bare our teeth at each other. Let's make a getaway. The crowds haven't gone South yet, and, if there be a scattering of buds and matrons, some of them are comely, if inane, good dancers, smart dressers, and they'll while away the time. Want to go?"

Wainwright smiled. "I do now, but wait and see. In a moment she'll be here, and then we'll take our feet from the chair, and slip again into that state of infinite expectation. It's foolish, it's maddening, but, after all, you must grant that we, and not she, are causing all this stupid procrastination. Even as we're anxious for a culmination, we dread it. Despite us, it will mean

the end of a long, splendid association, Willard. Wait and see."

Topping his words, the doorbell resounded. And when Anielka entered, panting, her cheeks very rosy from the cold, her hair a little disarranged, the two looked at each other and smiled, as, with her usual placid dignity, she seated herself in the armchair.

"I've had a horrid day," she sighed, "I'm growing tired of the cabaret, and then, too, this afternoon somebody took me to the most vexing *matinée*. It was all about birth control, and eugenics, and the social evil, and single standards, and loathesomeness in general. As soon as I get my breath, I'll play some Grieg. He's amorphous, ambiguous, a little sugary, an ideal antidote to that *matinée*."

"Eugenics infuriate me," Wainwright snapped. "I tell you, it's pernicious, baneful—all this talk about the unfit. Who are the unfit, anyway? Drunkards, criminals, epileptics, the diseased, the insane, they tell you. But let me add, and what I say is without qualification, is based upon statistics, in fact,—no great artist has ever lived, no great poet, painter, musician, philosopher, statesman, religious founder, but who in some way comes under the ban of unfitness. Genius has been very plausibly interpreted as a form of madness. That extreme genius and extreme folly are kin, all the geniuses themselves always have contended. Let the numbskulls go on with their eugenics, and their birth control, and their social evil, and everything. Let them continue printing their little booklets. But make them cite, as so many horrible examples, as so many criminals, neurotics, alcoholics or epileptics, not only men notably eccentric, not only the Poes, Baudelaires, Nietzsches, and Verlaines, but scientists like Cardau and Spencer, musicians like Chopin and Beethoven, statesmen like Cæsar, Napoleon, Bismarck, Richelieu, Frederick the Great; make them include Renan, Rousseau, Voltaire, Whitman, Newton, and religious leaders like Luther and Savanarola, like St. Paul and St. Fran-

cis, like Mahomet and their own—"

"Don't!" Anielka gasped, shrinking away, her hands at her breast as if protecting something dear she held there. Never before had she looked so exactly like a little Madonna. "Don't say that, Louis." And, after a pause, her voice lightening, "As for a single standard of morals," she went on, "of course I believe in it. So do I justify my mode of existence. As for eugenics and such things, I like the idea. I hope some day soon it will prevail. Then all the stupid, worthy folk will mate off, brawn with brawn, dolt with dolt, and I, as forewoman of a birth-control jury, shall condemn their offspring, each and every one, exterminate the dunderheads, and leave the world to nice people such as we."

"My dear Anielka," Mallory asked, "I'm curious to know: just how do you reconcile your religious sentiments with the views you've accumulated, the rather startling ideas you sometimes voice?"

"But—but easily," she altered back, "very easily, Willard. It's just what I've always told you: religion and ethics are not akin. 'Everything is permitted to genius.' From time immemorial that's been the slogan of the immortal tribe. And the Holy Writ says that the sons of God do not commit sins, that they cannot commit sins, because they are sons of God—says the very same thing in different words, you see, and it doesn't mention the daughters of God. They talk of the emancipation of woman. If it be true that we're going through an emancipation, then the first thing we must realize is, that even if it be but a spark, even if we can't but see how faint and feeble it is, the divine fire burns in man, and in man only. We must see that only in its light, only as reflectors of the glow, may we enjoy its radiance. It can't be enkindled in us. As a first step, even if it rankle, and tear the heart, we must adopt the masculine viewpoint, must—"

Just then a mighty gust of wind roared outside, shook the panes as with a glad fury, and sent a draught through



the room which chilled, and caused the candle flames suddenly to flicker. They all started, and Anielka, blinking her eyes affrightedly, ran and stood between the two, a little, trembling hand resting on an arm of either chair. There was something uncanny in the violent blast thus topping her words, as if an elemental force had been listening, and with a glad roar voiced its applause.

There followed a profound stillness. Even the fire burned steadily without the sound of a subdued crackle. An atmosphere of expectation, of tense, breathless suspense, as if something momentous, must quickly be decided upon, hung over the three. Suddenly, the men's glances met, and each was astonished for the second time at the latent enmity he read in the other's face. They looked up at Anielka, the poet's great, black eyes full of yearning and fervor, Mallory's half-closed, quizzical, but alert.

"Oh,"—a tear ran down her cheek—"it frightens me, the great noise and then this stillness. I'm shivery and scared. I want to put my arms around a man's neck, to lay my head on his shoulder. I want"—suddenly she sobbed, "Oh, it's a shame that it couldn't go on this way a little longer, but everything proclaims this the culminating moment. I've chosen long ago, but I wanted to wait for you to discover for yourselves that I chose wisely and well."

Once more a silence. Mallory felt embarrassed, shamefaced, silly. The situation was ludicrous. Why make a rite of such proceedings? Anielka's face was rapt. Only the fact that she looked very lovely kept him from laughing outright. And, as she stood there, he saw her turn slowly to Wainwright with outstretched arms.

She leaned over his chair, her arms about him, his head pillowed on her shoulder. Mallory's eyelids dropped lower.

"Dear Louis," she whispered, "you're such a very dear Louis, you know. You think of the revelation of my soul, don't you, when Willard is thinking of my

shoulders? But, Louis, I've a crabbed, ugly little soul. I couldn't reveal it. It would be like exposing a bony knee. While as for my shoulders—I—I'm proud of my shoulders, Louis, dear."

Wainwright, slightly bewildered, seemed slowly to recover himself. Gently untwining her encircling arms, he rose, and patted her cheek.

"If only incidentally, I thought of your shoulders, too, dear. But it's quite all right—quite, quite all right, Anielka." And he walked toward the door.

Both men felt a sudden sadness at the idea of parting, and Mallory leaned his head in his hand. He could not bear to watch his friend leave the room.

"But, Louis," Anielka, pattering after him, pleaded, "you're sure you understand? Willard is lazier, more characterless, less ardent, more of a flaneur, not quite so—so big as you. He's my type. We're of the same species, while with you it would have been too serious, too tragic, perhaps,—too much of an upheaval. You understand?"

He nodded lightly. "If only some day I may enjoy you again, vicariously, through Willard's accounts, nothing will have been forfeited. It's the fear of having lost him as well which casts perhaps the more depressing gloom."

"But, Louis," she remonstrated, laughing, "you silly one, not to know that when all this is a remote memory, between you two a friendship will be flourishing as never before."

In the doorway he turned for a last look. Her eyes were fixed upon Mallory's bent head, and, seeing what lay in them, his own closed suddenly, and at once he walked away.

Mallory rose presently and approached her. In his eyes there was no unwonted light, on his face no flush. Calmly, methodically even, he lifted a cool, steady hand, and ran his long fingers lightly through the fair hair rippling about her forehead.

Several weeks later, when, one evening, Mallory entered the Brevoort, he saw Wainwright sitting alone. A glad-



ness leapt into his eyes which, an instant later, he saw mirrored on his friend's face. At first a slight embarrassment was apparent, reflecting itself in the usual ineptitudes, the usual how-are-yous, and what-have-you-been-dosings. But in their handclasp was a firmness, a strength, a buoyant determination, as if with it they pledged themselves at once to resume the old halcyon association, and never again to allow an obtrusion to creep in. For a while Wainwright spoke desultorily, of his work, of his diversions, drifting finally into the subject which both felt must be met and done away with for the erstwhile camaraderie completely to re-establish itself.

"And Anielka?" he asked.

Mallory smiled. "Gone! Gone with the first week of Lent. It is her custom, it seems, always to spend that week on the water, concentrating the requisite prayers and penances of the season into the days of crossing. Otherwise, you see, they would interfere with the festivities just prior to the regular Vienna season, festivities she never misses. It makes her sad, of course, thus to have anything interfere with Lenten duties, but the Eternal Father in his omniscience must understand, she is sure, and blame, not her, but the Vienna season."

"And as a sweetheart," the poet asked, after a pause, "did she realize expectations?"

The other nodded. "Beyond them. To a man who takes the pleasure of woman's society somewhat seriously, each successive love adds a note in a long, arpeggiated chord. Anielka's is a faint, ethereal treble note, as yet the most distinct, the most refreshingly caressful of the lot. There was something rare and sweet about the little creature. I'll never forget her, curled up in the armchair, her downy, shoulder-length hair all luminous in the fire-light, discussing, in that baby-prattle voice of hers, Ornstein recitals, the synchronists, the *vers-libre* movement in America, or Billy Gallagher's, and

fingering a scapular knotted about the roundest throat in the world, while an ivory-white velvet gown hung from the milkiest shoulders I've ever seen. She was the embodiment of spiritualized voluptuousness, fleshly, true, but with a sort of defecated carnality,—like the sole of a baby's foot—you understand?"

"I was going to write a poem about her," Wainwright went on at length, "stamped with a gentle feminine allure, tinged with the mystic beauty of a dead religion, imbued with a new enlightenment which taught her unswervingly to respect the masculine point-of-view, which evinced itself in her attitude toward love, for instance, in her regarding it as an ephemeral thing even if by doing so she tore her heart—do you recollect, 'tear the heart,' it was her very phrase, even—"

"I protest," Mallory interrupted, "I protest vigorously, Louis. Don't divest her of her charm, please. Do you mean to tell me she was addicted to life-long passions, and any such boring things? Can you imagine Anielka as a wife? Can you imagine her become a habit? Or growing old? Or, nursing babies? And liking it? Don't apotheosize her into banality. Through her cognizance of the auspicious moment for a cessation of amenities, she attained to perfection in the art of pleasing."

The poet laughed shortly. "I know better. Her ideas, her looks, her personality, her existence—they were all epitomized in a look I saw on her face. That's why I didn't write the poem: it would have been cheap and ineffectual, like one of those tedious anecdotal paintings. When I was leaving that night,—your head was bowed, so you couldn't have seen,—but, at the door I turned to see her for the last time. She was engrossed in you—I blinked and turned away. . . . I tell you, Willard, it was dazzling, other-worldly, transcendental . . . that look of blind adoration in her eyes!"

## THESE THINGS I REMEMBER

By Harold Cook

SEEING a plumber's leg sticking through a hole in the ceiling; spending a whole day killing snakes with stones and then stretching them out, side by side, in the road for the wagons to run over; dreaming, on the same night that I killed the snakes, that I was sleeping on shiny apples, arranged in rows which kept moving in opposite directions; taking a cake somewhere for somebody and dropping it in the road; moving into a new house and wishing to go back to the old one where the rats were; catching cabbage butterflies and pinning them to the side of the house in rows and watching their wings flutter; making a face at my father and the consequences; breaking big stones open to see what was inside; always wanting to keep a snowflake which sparkled under the arc-light for a scarf-pin; sailing a Woolworth man-of-war in the bathtub; running the length of a street beside the first automobile I ever saw; going to Sunday School with my sister, getting mad at her and yanking a string of pearls from her neck; picking a large bunch of myrtle and wondering why they wouldn't put it on my great-aunt's coffin; being nearly killed with coal-gas; seeing a woman who had just had a fit; shaking hands with my left hand; building a fire of straw under the porch of a new house; seeing a woman who wore a snake ring which had diamonds for eyes; getting flypaper stuck in my hair; catching flies and cutting their heads off; having my thumb nearly sawed off; meeting a French woman who had been kidnapped and taken to Italy; meeting an Englishman whose sister was a countess; strangling the first time I took a shower; watching an actress bead her eyes; the cigarette I just laid down.



## JEWELS O' EARTH

RUBIES, pearls, emeralds, diamonds, sapphires, amethysts, topazes, beryls, lapis lazuli, moonstones, tourmalines, almandite, garnets, turquoises, opals, Ruth's eyes. . . .



R ESPECTABILITY is the state of never having been caught doing anything you wished to do.



T HE girl who can truthfully say she has never been kissed surely has no reason to be conceited.

# THE GREAT PROPHETSTOWN BANK ROBBERY

By Frank R. Adams

THE night-watch in Prophetstown carried no halberd nor torch, and if he had called the hours and shouted "All's well" every few minutes, someone would have shied a shoe at him from an upstairs window. Prophetstown went to bed with the chickens and any roistering blade returning from a debauch at the M. E. church as late as nine-thirty was likely to have the echoing streets all to himself.

Still, there was a watchman, a constable, who patrolled the lonely thoroughfares with a lantern looking for a dishonest man, or, in fact, society of any sort. For he was a lonesome soul although a sociably inclined one.

He had weathered sixty-odd sets of seasons and each one had left him a little mellowed, a little fuller of the milk (and alcohol) of human kindness. Not that he would admit to being old. Quite the contrary. In a voice that quavered he asserted that he was just as spry as he was thirty years ago. Still he used a stout cane in his pilgrimage through the city streets. He claimed that it was a weapon, but the boys hid it from him once and discovered that he couldn't walk without it.

The Prophetstown police force boasted no particular uniform. A pair of barn-door pants and a hickory shirt formed the background for the principal feature. This was a large star pinned conspicuously to the front left suspender while waking and worn on the watch pocket of the nightgown when in bed. It was popularly supposed that when the constable took his regular Saturday night inventory and Wazir

ablution he held the star in his mouth so as not to be without it for an instant.

His regular route led him past the "State Bank of Prophetstown" once every hour. He himself and the State Bank are the two everlasting institutions of Prophetstown. Organized about a week after the town was first chartered, the bank has remained unchanged to this day. The same safe still does duty, the same netting furnishes alleged protection to the cashier, paying-teller, note-teller, bond department and bookkeeper, all vested in the single person of Harry Crandall, and the same lamppost outside the door still furnishes illumination on moonless nights and supports a wooden mail-box as it did before the war.

Every hour during the night it was the watchman's custom to try the door and peer nearsightedly through the windows. In plain view he could see the old safe, about the size of a dry-goods box, and beside it, lighting up the faded gold lettering on its face, was a kerosene lamp on a kitchen chair.

He had just made his two o'clock rounds one summer morning when a heavy-set individual with his cap drawn over his eyes who had been waiting in the shadow of the bank stepped forth and gazed thoughtfully after the retreating figure.

Then he turned to the bank and surveyed it approvingly. He exhaled his breath with a sigh of satisfaction.

"All mine," he murmured, clicking his tongue against his teeth.

The heavy-set man carried a grip which rattled as he set it down in front

of the bank door as if it were full of plumber's tools.

With leisurely nonchalance he opened the valise and selecting a bunch of keys and a flash lantern therefrom began to fuss with the lock. Nothing happened and he dived into the grip once more and brought out a couple of small files.

While he was alternately working with them and trying the keys in the door the night watchman, who had decided unexpectedly to have a small bite of lunch, came back toward the bank.

When he noticed the man at the door of the bank the old constable stood watching him for a moment with lively interest.

Finally he coughed.

The man at the door gave a slight start and looked sidewise at him without turning his head and then went on with his work, paying no further attention to the old man.

"Say!" shouted the watchman.

"Oh, go away," interrupted the heavy-set man. "Don't bother me. Can't you see I am busy?"

"What's that?" The old man cupped his hand behind his ear like a wind scoop out of a port hole. "Speak up loud."

The other raised his voice but went on with his work. "Don't bother me, I am busy."

"Huh," the watchman sniffed. "Workin' kind of late at night, ain't ye? What are you doing?"

"I am going to rob this bank."

"What's that? Speak louder."

The burglar desisted from his efforts at the bank door long enough to turn to the old man and shout, "I am going to rob this bank. I don't need any help. Little deaf, ain't you?"

This was attacking the watchman in a sensitive spot. "No, I ain't deaf," he said truculently. "I hear perfectly, but you don't talk very loud. So you are a burglar, are you? Who do you think I be?"

"I haven't any idea," returned the burglar patiently. "Who are you?"

"I am the night watchman." The constable patted himself on the chest

proudly. "I am an officer of the law."

"Go on." This scornfully. "You ain't a policeman. What would a policeman be doing on the streets at this time of night? Don't bother me or I will hunt up a real officer and have you arrested as a nuisance."

"What did you say?"

The burglar shortened his speech for emphasis. "You ain't a policeman."

"Dod gast it!" shouted the old man, exasperated, "I tell you I am a policeman and you've got to stop."

The burglar was sceptical. "I don't believe you are a regular policeman."

"Yes, I be. See here is my commission, all signed by the mayor." The town guardian triumphantly produced a much-thumbed document from his hip pocket and handed it to the burglar.

The burglar opened it and read it hastily by the light of his flash lantern.

"Yes," he conceded at last, "you're a policeman sure enough. Now that I admit it if you will just run along I will be much obliged."

"What's that, I didn't quite get it?"

The burglar shouted. "If I admit you are a policeman will you run along and not bother me?"

The other debated his proposition. "I can't do that. You know I am the watchman. I have to watch. You don't mind if I stay around, do you? I am a sociable fellow and night watching is a lonesome job. You are the first person I ever met in the village who sits up as late as I do. Can't I stay?"

"Well," the burglar conceded with ill grace, "I suppose so."

The old man was hurt at his tone. "You don't seem to know how to treat an officer of the law."

"It is lack of education on my part," the burglar apologized. "I never met many of them—thank heaven. What should I do?"

"Well," suggested the old man thoughtfully, "I sort of hoped maybe you'd play a game of pinochle with me."

"I would," said the burglar pleasantly, "but I have got to get through with this job and catch the first train. This

is my busy season and I've got a date to rob a safe in Peoria tomorrow night."

As he turned back to the door he noticed casually a piece of pipe sticking out of the building near the sidewalk.

"What's this?" he asked, touching it. "A burglar alarm?"

"No, sirree. That's where they attach the vacuum cleaner, they use when they clean out the bank."

"They won't never need to use it again when I get through tonight." The burglar allowed his eye to rove over the entrance. "Then where is the burglar alarm?"

"They ain't got none now," the watchman admitted regretfully. "They used to have a dandy but the last bank robbers that was here stole it. It cost the bank a lot of money and they couldn't afford to lose another one."

The burglar worked in silence on the door fastening.

Finally he said partly to himself: "The lock on this door is one of the poorest I ever saw."

The watchman happened to hear what he said. "Why, I allowed that was a pretty good lock. I am the agent for that kind in this town."

"Is that so?" inquired the burglar with interest. "I am the man that invented it."

"Gosh," ejaculated the policeman in homespun. "You say you invented that lock and yet you call it a poor one."

"Certainly. What kind of a lock would you expect a burglar to invent?"

"It's curious, ain't it?" the constable ruminated. "I knew you was a burglar the minute I set eyes on you. It's more curious because I never seen one before. I suppose it is just the detective instinct."

"Detective instinct?" the burglar repeated inquiringly.

"Yep." This proudly. "I have been a detective twenty years and you are the first crook I ever met."

"Humph, what kind of a detective are you?"

"Private detective."

"Private?"

"Yep. Nobody thinks I am a detec-

tive but me. But I know a lot about crime, I do. I've read all that Sherlock Holmes ever wrote."

The lock on the bank door at last yielded to persuasion. The burglar shot it and turned the knob.

"There, that's done." He turned speculatively to the old watchman. "Now if you are a regular detective come in and help me lift this safe out on the sidewalk where it will be easier to get at. The light from the street lamp is pretty good out here."

"I don't know whether I ought to," doubted the constable.

"Why not?"

"It's agin the law to obstruct the sidewalk, but," and he started for the door, "I guess that at this time of night it don't make much difference and we can put it back so nobody will notice."

The safe was pretty heavy, but together they managed to roll it out and place it where the light of the street lamp fell upon the dial.

"Say," said the watchman, apologetically, "there was one thing I forgot to mention, Mister, and it may hurt your feelings if I tell you now."

"That's all right." The burglar was kneeling before the safe and had started to drill a hole in it. "Fire away. Don't mind my feelings. I ain't sensitive. What is it?"

"I forgot to tell you that you was under arrest."

"All right," assented the burglar, not looking up from his work.

"I didn't think you would give up so easy," said the watchman, almost disappointed. "You admit that you are arrested?"

"Sure." The drill was biting into the steel at a great rate.

"I would take you over to the jail," explained the custodian of the law hospitably, "but they rented it last month for a cider mill."

"That's all right. I don't mind."

"Anyway, I'll search you."

While the burglar was working on the safe the aged watchman went through his clothes in professional

style and appropriated a watch and a sizeable roll of bills.

"Five hundred dollars!" announced the constable in awe as he finished counting the confiscated specie. "Burgling must be good nowadays. Pays better than detecting, I reckon."

"Be careful, grandpa," admonished the burglar. "You will have to give all that money back to me." He had both hands on the drill and kept on working.

"I'll be careful of it," agreed the old man, producing an envelope from his pocket. "I'll put it all in here. Have you got a pencil?"

The burglar fumbled in his vest and discovered the stub of a pencil which he handed to the watchman silently. The old man wrote painfully on the envelope containing the burglar's valuables.

"Now that you have arrested me," said the burglar, resuming his work, "I will go ahead and get the safe open."

"That's fair enough," agreed the other. "Show me how you do it."

"All right. You may want to open it yourself some evening. This one ain't as hard to open as a tin dime bank." The burglar rattled the knob scornfully. It sounded like a truck load of tinware crossing a cobble-stone pavement.

"Gee," said the watchman admiringly, "you've had lots of experience at this business, haven't you?"

"I should say so," admitted the workman complacently. "I have blown safes from the Atlantic to the Pacific."

"From the Atlantic to the Pacific? You don't say. You must be a hurricane. How did you come to be a robber, anyhow?"

"Oh, it came natural," said the burglar, patiently. "My father was a lawyer. How did you come to be a night watchman?"

"Oh, I've got insomnia and can't sleep anyway, so they gave me the job. Besides," he added, "I am too old to work regular at anything else." Still searching the burglar's clothes he produced a small flask.

"Be careful of that," warned the yegg man.

"Why? What is it?"

"Soup—nitro-glycerine," the burglar exclaimed. "If you drop it, there is enough in that bottle to blow you from here to New York."

The watchman did not quite catch what he said, "What's that?"

The burglar repeated, "If you drop that it will blow you from here to New York."

"You don't say so." The old man fumbled the flask, but caught it before it struck the pavement. "I have always wanted to see New York before I die, too."

"Hand it to me," directed the burglar impatiently.

The old man did so and watched the other make a paper funnel and pour part of the contents of the flask into the hole he had made in the safe.

While he was making a fuse the custodian of the peace pulled out a folded pamphlet which was sticking out of the burglar's pocket.

"Gosh," he exclaimed, "you've got the last number of The Old Sleuth Library, ain't you? You must come from the city. We won't get this number here until Saturday." He leaned comfortably against the safe and held the paper up to the light so that he could see to read. "Old Sleuth Beats the Bank Robbers, or Who Stole the Thompson Tiara! I am glad I run across you." He hitched himself up comfortably on the safe and began to read.

The burglar meanwhile lit the fuse which communicated with the explosive inside the safe. It sputtered ominously.

"You'd better get away before this thing explodes," he admonished the old man.

"What's that?" he asked, too absorbed to catch what the other was saying.

"The safe is going to blow up," the burglar shouted.

"This is good," the watchman commented enthusiastically. "Bertram, the bank robber, thought that at last



he caught the famous old sleuth napping. But no, the great detective never sleeps."

The yegg man pulled at the old man's sleeve. "Better come away."

"Wait just a minute till I finish this chapter." The old man turned a page.

The fuse burned dangerously near the hole. The yegg man gave one look at it and withdrew hastily.

"Better come along," he invited the old man.

The watchman read. "Old sleuth was wounded in a dozen places and his right arm hung limp at his side, but he did not give up."

Suddenly there was an explosion and the door of the safe was blown out violently.

"What say?" asked the watchman, not looking up from his book. "I didn't catch that."

The burglar not deigning to reply, returned to the safe and opened the compartments inside. It was empty save for a tin dinner pail.

"The safe is empty," he announced to the watchman. "Where is the money?"

"Oh, the money." The watchman looked at him regretfully and apologized, "I forgot to tell you the bank is busted. The cashier got away with all the money last week. I just use this safe to keep my lunch in. See the top lifts up like an ice-box."

He scrambled off from his seat and lifted up the top of the safe. It was hinged at the back. "Darned ingenious, ain't it?" he inquired.

Suddenly in the distance a deep whistle was heard.

"What's that?" asked the burglar.

"That's the limited to Chicago," said the watchman carelessly. "They stop here for water. If you've got to leave town you've just got time to make it."

"I guess I will," said the burglar. "Give me back my watch and money."

"What's that?" the watchman asked as he moved carelessly in the direction

of the lamp post. "You'll have to speak louder."

He opened the flap of the mail box and dropped the envelope which he held in his hand into it. The burglar repeated loudly, "I want my money and my watch."

"Oh, your money and your watch?" the old man repeated with genuine concern in his voice. "Ain't that too bad? You'll have to wait over until to-morrow, then. I just mailed 'em there to Archibald Pointdexter." He pointed to the post box.

The burglar uttered a howl of rage. "Who in Prophetstown is Archibald Pointdexter?"

"I am him," the watchman confessed. "My mother named me out of Bertha M. Clay."

The burglar indicated the mail box. "You dropped my money and watch in there?"

"Yep. I thought they would be safer if Uncle Sam was taking care of 'em."

The burglar with business-like celerity started to break open the box with a jimmy.

"Better not do that," warned the watchman.

The burglar snarled. "I would like to see you stop me."

The aged watchman grabbed the burglar by the wrist and pulled him forward so that the lamp post was between his arms, then before the heavy-set man could recover from his surprise he produced a pair of handcuffs and snapped them over his wrists.

"There, gol ding it," said the watchman vengefully. "Who said I wasn't no policeman?"

"This is a hell of a town," said the burglar after he had pondered his situation for a few moments. Then he inquired hopefully, "You aren't going to keep my five hundred dollars, are you?"

"I would like to," admitted the watchman regretfully, "but I owe just that amount on a mortgage that is due to-morrow, so I guess I will have to spend your money. Any other questions you would like to ask?"

"No."

"Then if you will be right quiet I will read this story to you."

He settled himself comfortably on the broken safe.

"Chapter One, Old Sleuth At Bay.

A shot rang out in the night. What had happened—"

The watchman had just finished read-

ing the story when the slumbering village began to come to life. One of the earliest risers telephoned the county sheriff twelve miles away. But the sheriff couldn't be convinced that the aged constable had really taken a prisoner and refused to come over for him.

So they had to let him go.



## A LOVER IN NEW YORK

By Richard Florance

BECAUSE I love you,  
I love great ships on a morning sea,  
Or at their docks all silently  
At gloaming time, one gold light dreaming.

Because I love you,  
I love brave days and glad winds streaming,  
And valiant, tenuous bridges soaring  
Over the river's cloudy gleaming.  
I love the night freight's distant roaring  
Through far, deep nights. . . . And then the throng  
Of stars, and in their spaces, strong  
Silence and solitude and rest.

Because I love you,  
I love the little cradle song  
You sing your baby all day long,  
Upon your breast—  
Though I have lost in her embrace  
Your heart that was my resting place.



## WISDOM FROM THE BOHEMIAN

ONE hair of a pretty woman can draw more than a rope as thick as your wrist. A woman's advice is like wheat sown in summer: it turns out well once in seven years.

Nature is very wasteful. One tongue would be enough for ten women.

Tell a woman she is a beauty, and the devil will tell it to her every day thereafter.

There was never a looking-glass that told a woman she was ugly.

## SOME OF MY RELATIVES

By Laura Kent Mason

### *My Mother-in-Law*

SHE is a large woman, too stout, whose stays are always too tight.  
She likes to talk about how ill she was and how she is dieting.  
She likes to tell how she sacrifices herself for everyone.  
A conversation, to interest her, must be a song of praise of her.  
She repeats little stupid things that people say about her.  
She thinks that everyone likes her.  
She talks about sociological subjects which she thoroughly misunderstands.  
She disapproves of modern literature, modern art and modern morals.  
She is cruelly religious and just.

### *My Unmarried Older Sister-in-law*

She has small eyes and little, thin wrinkles around her mouth.  
She tells me that she is much younger looking than girls ten years younger than she is—and believes it.  
She says she doesn't want to marry but could at any time she wanted to.  
She cultivates young, vapid boys and likes to talk "deep" things with them.  
She is busy reading the things most people abandon the year they leave school.  
I am too shallow to be included in her "deep" conversations.  
She wonders why I married her brother.  
She never saw much to him, a stupid sort.  
But, of course, being her brother made him rather superior.  
She likes to think he was my only chance.

### *My Married Sister-in-law*

She is pink and plump but her eyes are too small.  
She has two snuffy little babies.  
She feels vastly superior because she has "fulfilled her mission" by having them.  
She talks only about what her husband does and says and won't eat and why.  
She feels complacent because she has married money and acts the Lady Bountiful by giving little useless, shopworn gifts that no one has room for.  
She condescendingly feels that she and I have much in common because we have both gone through the marriage ceremony.  
She feels that I am not a natural cook and housekeeper and is sorry for me.  
She herself is. She is glad, though, that her husband can afford good servants so that she doesn't have to cook or do housework.

### *My Little Sister-in-law*

She is too fat for the kind of clothes she wears.  
She tries to act awfully innocent and likes to ask embarrassing questions.

The rest of the family speak of her as delightfully worldly.  
 But I know, for I used to do the same thing myself.  
 When she comes to see me, she snoops around hunting for something to eat  
 or something mysterious, she doesn't know just what. Neither do I.  
 She always hints for presents.  
 She repeats, in her innocent manner, what the rest of the family have said  
 about me.  
 She likes to visit me because I don't make her practice her music lessons.  
 The reason I don't is not to be kind but because I can't stand the noises  
 she makes.  
 She goes to a private school and isn't allowed to go with just everybody.

*My Frivolous Cousin, on Dad's Side*

She is the beauty of the family and takes it pretty hard.  
 She'd like to be good friends with me but thinks I'm not a good sport.  
 She'll flirt with a man at a *thé dansant* and then, when he comes to ask for a  
 dance, introduce him, with a little air of surprise as "my old friend, Mr. Well-  
 ington, of Cleveland. My, this is unexpected!"  
 She wears five-dollar stockings and then wonders if it wouldn't be cheaper for  
 me to have my afternoon frocks made by a woman who'd come to the house  
 by the day.  
 She doesn't talk much to women, but she has a pretty, helpless way when  
 men are around.  
 Still, she can look more modest than nearly any girl I know in evening gowns  
 that come only about half an inch above her waist line.

*Uncle Fred, My Mother's Brother*

He is a chinless man with a large gold watch chain.  
 He feels that I have married beneath me.  
 But he is pleased that I have married at all.  
 I was rather wild, he always said, and he was afraid I might put some sort  
 of a shadow on the family.  
 He isn't at all sure, now, that I'll stay married long.  
 He looks with suspicion at every man who happens to call while he is visit-  
 ing me.  
 He feels that he could get something on me if he stayed long enough.  
 After his visits, he sends a huge box of stale drugstore candy with a card,  
 "From your loving Uncle."



ALCOHOL, of course, is a curse to man. Many a marriage has been super-  
 induced by a bottle of good Burgundy.



MARRIAGE, too, has its great heroes, just as war has its Caesars, music its  
 Bachs, and commerce its Rockefellers.

## TO BE CONCLUDED IN AFGHANISTAN

By Yar Nadir Khan

IT is said that the ways of Fate are devious, making nought of distances and the swing of the Centuries. Thus, because a painted barbarian with a troglodyte's sense of humor once used a slain enemy's skull as a drinking-cup, his latter-day descendant in the Faubourg St. Germain, he of the processional nose and the recessional chin, still sports a skull "azure on a field argent" on his 'scutcheon; and, because Yama, the Hindu god, many thousands of years ago kicked his mother in the stomach, there exist Brahmin families to-day, kin to the unfilial Yama, who are looked down on by other Brahmins with a certain amount of condescending pity.

These things being true, it is a matter of small wonder that the fiasco of Nasrullah Khan's social entrée in the city of New York was the fault of Yakub Hydar Khan, the "Red Chief," as he was called in Afghanistan because of his flaming-red beard which was in such charming contrast with his complexion . . . the latter having the melancholy appearance of a lemon whose days are numbered. And yet the scene of Nasrullah Khan's social entrée was on the Upper West Side, while the Red Chief lived ten thousand miles away, on a high hill to the South of Kabul, which he had chosen for purely strategical reasons. For the hill commanded the crossing of three caravan routes, and thus the Chief could easily jump upon the merchants from his stronghold, replenish his exchequer, and give thanks to Allah who had made his neighbors weaker than himself.

For Yakub Hydar Khan was not a

patriot. Not at all. He was a thumping, steel-reinforced individualist who believed in the truth of the Pali saying that a man must "measure the world with himself immense"; which, translated into actions, meant raids, forays, and occasional killings on a business-like scale.

When Yakub Hydar Khan shot the Englishman in the Lower Passes and then killed all the witnesses to make sure that he had shot the man in self-defence, and when Nasrullah's father, the Governor of Kabul, saw that the British were quite annoyed over this little matter . . . when finally the Governor discovered that the deceased Briton's sporting rifle and field-glasses were among the possessions of his son, he refused to believe that these two things had been a present to the latter from the dead man.

"Go traveling, my son," he said. "Remember the Hindu saying: 'A man who does not travel has no felicity, and a good man who remains at home is a bad man.' Go to America. Last year, when I went to Delhi to see the great Durbar given in honor of the King-Emperor, I met there an American, and we became friends. He taught me a game called Poker, and the teaching cost me half a *lakh* of rupees . . . and I sold him a few horses . . ." the Governor blushed, ". . . nice little horses. Thus our respect for each other grew. I described to him how, by the grace of Allah the All-Merciful, I had become possessed of the lands, the goods, the cattle, and the women of the Ghilzai tribe; and he told me similar tales of battles in Wall Street . . . wherever that is. A wolf he; a grey-wolf I! Go

to him! Look! Listen! Learn! Do not play Poker with him!"

"But," Nasrullah Khan interrupted, "but what of Yakub Hydar Khan? Are you not going to punish him?"

"Thy wisdom is as the beard of the beardless. Non-existent!" replied the Governor. "How can I punish him since, careful man, he killed all the witnesses, and since thou art going to America. Remember the location of the Red Chief's castle. Remember the size of his exchequer. Remember that fifty per cent. of it goes to me."

So Nasrullah Khan came to America, to New York. He met the American who opened wide the gates of his house to him. Then came his social entrée, followed by his loss of face.

A woman caused it.

Of course there were many women present that night. For Yakub Khan discovered to his great surprise that the Americans mix the two sexes practically from the hour of their birth; a steady progression which leads through the schools, the universities, the bathing beaches, the social life . . . straight up to the divorce court, where the Judge separates the two sexes again.

But for him there was only one woman that night.

Latter-day theologians of the Shae-fey's sect have declared that the Koran does not contain a single passage which can be interpreted to mean that woman has no soul. But Nasrullah Khan called these theologians liars. He called them grey-minded owls bereft of sympathy and of the decencies. He called them unbeautiful and particularly illegitimate donkeys. Then he got real angry and called them names. He declared that woman has no soul. Not a bit of it. At least not the one whom he took in to dinner that night.

But, soul or no soul, she had the gleaming shoulders of Lakshmi, the waist of a she-lion, white arms like twin marble columns, and hair like the sunlight of forgotten years before there was Sin.

That much he saw.

For again the young Afghan was sur-

prised to discover that American women are short-sighted in matters of the emotions; that they try to attract by exposing, instead of attracting by hiding, as do the women in his far far home; that they ignored the truth of the Pukhtu saying that a thing that has been exposed and seen is a worthless thing . . . like a grape that has been pressed, a book that has been read.

The woman told him that her husband was jealous. That much she confided to him immediately after he had whispered into her ear a little impromptu translation of a Persian poem which his father had once addressed to a Nautch girl a cousin of his had given him as a present:

*Come, Zaida, for thou art the well of  
my love;*

*The stone of my contentment.*

*Desire is in my nostrils.*

*Come, soul of my soul, to the garden of  
forgetting.*

Then . . . for no earthly reason, Nasrullah Khan opined . . . she told him of her husband's jealous disposition.

Now the young Afghan had been taught in the *zenana* of his father's palace in Kabul that love is either the gift of nature or the reward of study. He had also been taught that it is woman's duty to first speak of love to man. He had thirdly been taught that when a woman speaks to a man of her husband's faults she begs for consolation: for love. And is not jealousy the gravest fault on earth? Is not jealousy a quality which cheapens purity, and which exalts hypocrisy?

So Nasrullah Khan smiled.

"Do not speak to me of your husband," he said. "I shall have him killed, if you wish. There is a man in my retinue, Hussain Shujah by name, who is an expert in matters of killing. No, my dear. Do not speak of your husband. He is an ancient and scaly crocodile who does not deserve the scented pearls which decorate his very ugly ears. Remember that it is better



to die loved in youth than hated in old age."

She looked at him. And there was a dancing light in her eyes; a soft, dancing, caressing light.

"You come from Afghanistan?" she asked.

"I do, Dispenser of Delights."

"You have come to America to learn?"

"Yes . . . some things," Nasrullah Khan replied, and he looked deeply into her eyes. "Will you teach me?"

"I will."

Again she smiled. Again there was a light in her eyes. A sweet smile, Nasrullah Khan thought. For that was before he had decided that the women of the West are things without soul, who play with the senses of men as a Tajik plays with his crooked dagger . . . without hurting himself.

So he asked her a question. She replied "No." But his father, that much-married potentate, had told him once that in nine cases out of ten a woman's "No" means an emphatic "Yes." He also remembered having heard that if you inform a woman that *she* loves *you* she will forthwith adore you; if you tell her that you are her master, she will forthwith become your slave; if you wish to win her, you must forthwith impose upon her.

Nasrullah Khan did these three things.

Finally the woman gave in. She agreed to meet him at lunch the next day . . . and afterwards . . . afterwards . . .

"You will . . . ah, teach me afterwards?" he queried.

"Yes," she replied in a low voice. "I shall surely teach you."

Nasrullah Khan slept late the following morning. He was pleased with himself. So he ordered Krishnavana Nath Gose, a Hindu pundit in his retinue, to compose a poem in his praise.

The Hindu did so. He informed his master that he was a fragrant flower to be worn in the embroidered turban of woman's love, that his soul was a flawless emerald of great value, that

his words were powdered rubies, that his sword was an angry snake hissing with blood . . . and then the poem went on praising in detail certain personal attributes of Nasrullah Khan of which the Anglo-Saxons are silent as a rule.

Nasrullah Khan was pleased with the poem. He agreed with the contents. He gave orders that two copies should be made of it: one to be sent to a certain young lady in Kabul, the other to a Nautch girl of his acquaintance in Amritsar.

He dressed carefully. He left his hotel, a conqueror. He said to himself that Fortune was squatting on his threshold, a slave.

At one o'clock he was at the place where he was to meet the woman. She came.

And with her came her husband, her mother, two paternal aunts, and three nieces.

They surrounded Nasrullah Khan with delighted exclamations.

"Oh, so charming of you!" . . . thus one of the paternal aunts.

"Thanks, old man, my wife gave me your invitation" . . . thus the jealous husband.

"What a deliciously foreign, unconventional way of arranging a lunch . . . so lovely . . . is that the fashion in Afghanistan?" . . . thus the mother, the other paternal aunt, and the three nieces in chorus.

Nasrullah Khan bowed. He thanked them for having come. Yes, he told them, they were right, it was indeed the fashion of Afghanistan.

They had lunch. They ate . . . very much. Then they went home.

So did Nasrullah Khan.

He gave Krishnavana Nath Gose, the Hindu pandit, a severe beating. Then he ordered him to write two more poems; one to prove that woman has no soul, the other an ode of vituperation which he told him to send to the Red Chief.

"Thou wilt also write a letter to the Red Chief," he said, and his voice was as passionless as Fate. "Thou wilt

therein inform that accurst pig-stealing fellow that I shall cut his throat from ear to ear as soon as I return to Afghanistan, and that I shall afterwards

feed his obscene remains to the dogs."

Then he went to a store, and bought himself an arsenal of the most deadly and most modern American weapons.



## HER OTHER SELF

By G. Vere Tyler

SHE was only happy when she could see a vast sky, open roads, trees and foliage of forest, or limitless ocean. She lived in an apartment where electric lights burned by day as well as by night, where all things natural were shut out, and thought of those things.

She loved the strength in men, they of herculean build, who scoffed at the serfdom of cities, who sailed rugged seas, or sang the song of the open road.

In an artificially lit drawing-room she reclined on a couch against silken sofa pillows, and talked with men, small of stature, who lived in the most modern of city hotels, and bowed low to the city spell. She listened eagerly while they breathed in her ear sarcastic epigrams that bit like an acid, witticisms that passed blown feathers over her nerves, and scoffings that desecrated all that she held sacred.

She surrendered her lips to these

men, taking their studied kisses as she allowed rare bon-bons to melt on her tongue, noting their effect upon her, while she gave her thoughts to heroes treading virgin forests, or sailing perilous seas.

She loved to drink from the clear bubbling spring by the side of a road, or the purplish waters of a mossy bucket that came up by the turn of a strong arm, from a deep well. And she drank red and yellow wines, those that sparkled, from labelled bottles, and Turkish coffee that was like mud, and tea drowned in rum, and cordials of rainbow colors, that carried in their cloying sweetness sensuous madness and physical pain. And when a new day came she bathed her brow in iced cologne water and looked into blue flames, seeing pictures that inspired yet eluded her.

And all the time she knew she was a degenerate and despised herself.



NO woman ever understands that there is such a thing as privacy. The nearest thing she can understand is secrecy, and several people have to be in the secret before even that is possible.



DO not tell me anything you should. If there is no reason you shouldn't tell it, it is sure to be dull!

## THE DAY AFTER

By Grace Hausmann Sherwood

THEY tell me, my relatives, that I cried the whole of the day after the night on which I was born. They tell how they looked for pins in my clothes, or what stood for clothes, of how they turned me on my small tummy, and patted my diminutive back, of how they thrust a bottle in my mouth and warmed me and cooled me by turns, all to no purpose. For twenty-four hours I wept and would not be comforted. Then I stopped. This was one of the things they always told in our family whenever the conversation turned on new babies, and it was sagely held to illustrate the perverse and mysterious ways of the human infant. Which only goes to show how, from the very first moment of our lives, we are misunderstood by an unsympathetic family. Perverse it may have seemed, but mysterious it certainly was not. I know why I cried. I have done the same thing over and over again in my not long life, and I suppose I shall continue to do it until I die. I cried, not because of hunger or heat or colic or cold or pins or anything else. I cried because, as the words of a song popular a few years ago ran, "It was the cold, grey dawn of the morning after." It was all over. I was born, and there was nothing further to look forward to.

It is a feeling which has pursued me ever since. On the Christmases of my childhood, this same family which failed so utterly to understand the bitterness of my heart on my first day with them did themselves proud on my account. Dolls, toys, candy, poured in on me until you would have supposed it would have kept me happy for a month just getting acquainted with my new

possessions. But no! It wasn't that I was not satisfied with what I had or did not appreciate it. It was exactly because Christmas Day had touched for me the zenith of joy, because anything less was nothing in comparison. I don't know that I reasoned this out, I was too small. But I do know that I woke up regularly on the twenty-sixth of December with a sinking at my heart. All the expectation was over! There was nothing left but to play with what one had! And Christmas would not come again for three hundred and sixty-five days!

One would have thought I would have outgrown it, but no. In the course of time I went to school, and as most people do, in the course of time I finished, and graduating time loomed in sight. It seemed to me I could hardly wait for that momentous day to arrive, when I would be free at last for all time from the dreary routine of school life. Of course my graduating dress and my long white kid gloves, the first I had ever had, helped me to wait more patiently, not to speak of my gifts, which began arriving before the shimmering dress came from the dressmaker's. Well, it came at last, that longed-for afternoon. I can feel yet how my knees wobbled as I stepped forth to take my diploma from the Bishop's hand, and how regal I felt as I stepped into the carriage with what I supposed to be the eyes of the whole world boring into my back. At last I was free, and absolutely happy!

I awoke late the next day. Was I not mistress of my own time now? Where was the joy, the importance of yesterday? Gone—fled utterly. And

in its stead, that ominous sinking at the heart; that sickening, gnawing! *Que faire?* The bottom had simply dropped out of everything. I got over it in time, but I can never forget my shamed surprise that my new freedom did not mean a thing to me, nor how I wandered about the house forlornly that June day, distraught, aimless, sniffing miserably at graduating roses, and wishing there was something that had to be done. Truly, the day after I graduated was the most miserable day I had ever known!

I did not put my hair down any more after that night, and all my new summer dresses were made long. I was a young lady, at last. I found it very exciting, chiefly on account of Tom. I had known Tom a long time, in fact I believe I knew him better than I did my own brothers, whose friend he was. But heretofore I had only known him in a brotherly, tennis sort of fashion. With my trailing skirts on, I began to notice that Tom was acting differently. And really I felt differently towards him, too. I wasn't a bit eager any longer to have Jack and Bill and Larry come poking into the house whenever Tom and I had just settled down—as if he had come to see them! I have always said anyhow that our boys were spoiled to death. Tom and I just had to go out for walks to get rid of them. One day, during the next October, when we were taking one of these walks, Tom asked me to marry him. Of course, I didn't say no. I suspect I had always expected to marry Tom, but I didn't know it until he asked me. We were about three miles from the city when it happened. His asking me, I mean. I suppose I walked them. I do not recall that Tom called on any passing vehicle to carry me home, but I have no recollection at all of covering the ground. I remember that at the expiration of an hour or so we were a long distance from the spot in which the question had been asked, but I don't know to this day how we got there. That's how happy I was. The world as a physical planet did not exist for me.

Wouldn't you think that this, at least, would have lasted?

Next morning I opened my eyes in wretchedness. The greatest thing that could happen to a girl had happened to me. I was loved! I loved in return! I was engaged and to the one man in the world!

That was exactly it. It was all over. All the wondering, all the dreaming about love and about the future, by a reality that surpassed imagination with its sweetness. What did that weigh in the face of the fact that the wondering and the dreaming were over? There was nothing to look forward to. The bottom had dropped out of everything, leaving me safe and hopeless.

I spent nearly all the day after I was engaged mooning by the window in my room, half afraid to show my face for fear my family would ferret out the terrible secret that I was miserable! Along about three o'clock, when I was trying to get up energy enough to dress, a fearful thought drove away my little remaining courage. It occurred to me, for the first time (I had been engaged for as much as twenty-four hours then), that as I had promised Tom to marry him I should have to leave my father and mother and brothers and the home in which we all had such a jolly time together, and go off to New York and live with—Tom Spaulding! And I didn't want to do it! Not in the least! Laughable as it may seem to you, Thomas Spaulding seemed to me at that moment the rankest outsider in the whole world and myself the most miserable of all the people in it. I did not know one could be so unhappy as I was the day after I was engaged!

We were married the next autumn. As the carriage rolled along to the station that crisp September afternoon, with just Tom and me in it, I was in a regular whirl. First I would steal a glance at my stalwart new husband, then I would feel if the ring was still there, and then I would look out of the window and if I saw anybody who did not appear to be married I would spare them some profound pity out of my

abundant store of happiness. Everybody we knew, almost, was at the station to see us off, our belongings were piled into the train, and we left to begin our new life together, radiant and joyful.

We were spending our honeymoon at the Water Gap, and the next morning we started out to climb Mt. Misni. As we strolled along I knew myself to be the unhappiest woman that such a fair scene ever greeted. I have always loved the mountains, and this spot where river and mountain meet had been my choice for this portentous time. Yet here I was, not twenty-four hours a bride, stumbling blindly over the rocks in the path, with no eyes for the blue September haze, for the glistening river, for distant Tammany, with its autumn foliage, with no pleasure in the crisp mountain air! Just a dismayed, miserable woman, with inward-turning thoughts. My malady had come upon me intensified a hundred times. Life had absolutely stopped! I was a bride! My name, home, station in life, husband and furniture were all chosen and fixed! There was absolutely nothing, henceforward, to do but just to keep on living! Hope was dead. In the whole world I had nothing more to look forward to!

While it lasted it was horrible. To tease me Tom told me, one day, that I talked in my sleep. If I could have been any more miserable than I was, that made me so, for I lay awake then,

fearing that if I slept my secret, of which I was terribly ashamed, would get away from me. I used to watch Tom furtively, trying to see if he had discovered as yet that he had a bride who was miserable just because she was a bride! And could have nothing further to hope for. . . .

And so it goes. I look across the table at Tom sitting reading in our own home and I smile involuntarily to think how happy I am. I could get up this minute and dance around the room if it were not so undignified, just for the sheer joy of being Tom's wife. But then, nothing has happened to us for ever so long. With my disposition, I don't want anything ever to happen again. It is when things happen that I get miserable. I am morally certain that if Tom inherited a fortune to-morrow I should wake up next day with that old familiar sinking feeling and stare into a joyless future because I could have everything I wanted and there wouldn't be anything left worth living for. And I know perfectly well that if we ever build that house in Pelham that Tom dreams about, the first morning I wake up in it I shall cry myself to sleep again because there will be nothing left in houses to hope for any longer.

Furthermore, I am going to keep on living just as long as I possibly can, for there is no doubt at all in my mind that the day after I die—I shall be absolutely and hopelessly miserable! . . .



IN a *tête-à-tête* we are never more interested than when we say nothing.



THE woman who throws herself at a man's head usually lands at his feet.



TO talk of love in a limousine is to play with fire in a barrel of gunpowder.

# A VIOL OF THREE STRINGS

By Muna Lee

## I

I WONDER who named each flower  
That hides among the grass—  
Was sponsor for virgin's bower  
And Venus' looking-glass.

Your sweet brown blossoms cover  
A stalk with quaint leaves set—  
Surely it was a lover  
That named you, Mignonette.

## II

What is love like? The wind  
That tears great temples down?  
Ah, no, the cruelest wind  
Leaves some few stones behind.

What is love like? The roar  
And anger of a tempest-ridden sea?  
Ah, no, the angriest sea  
Casts back some bits of wreckage to the shore.

## III

When we shall be dust in the church-yard  
—In twenty years—in fifty years—  
Who will remember you kissed me once,  
Who will be grieved for our tears?

The Locust tree will have grown taller,  
The old walks will be hidden with grass,  
And past our quiet graves may go straying  
A youth with an arm round his lass.

And the bee that shall suck your grave flowers  
—Anemone, stock, columbine  
May pause in his swift homing journey  
To taste of the honey from mine.





# CITIZEN JOHN THOMSON

By Achmed Abdullah

THEY liked him in a way at the railway office where he worked. They could not help themselves. For he was industrious, modest, clean, and ready to help. Perhaps there was a little unconscious pity mixed with this liking. But he himself did not feel it, and the others did not realize its existence. They only knew that there was something about him which was drossy and lean; something which isolated him, and which bored and irritated them.

Nobody called him by his Christian name. The boss called him "Thomson"; his colleagues called him "Mr. Thomson." And it was not respect which was responsible for the ceremonious prefix. It was a strange feeling, not of enmity nor of antipathy, but partaking oddly of both. When fat, jolly Jerry Magruder raffled off his silver watch just before Christmas, he even invaded the sanctum sanctorum of the Boss, and returned triumphantly with a dollar bill. But he did not ask Thomson to take a chance, although he had the desk next to his. He never as much as thought of it. It was the same thing with the office boys. Some of them had been known to address him as "Sir"; not one of them ever talked back to him. Yet they were not afraid of him.

At an early age he had married a girl born and bred in his small native town where he worked. He was happy in his married life, and he knew that she, too, was happy. He made rather a point of knowing it. He had no vices. His salary was sufficient, and he had a little money of his own.

They were a model couple, and they

lived in perfect harmony. Life was smooth. There were never any domestic scenes, and they did not nag each other. His manners were as perfect as they had been during the days of his courtship, and he had no desire beyond the four neat walls of his little bungalow, the square-trimmed hedges of his garden.

He was a firm believer in printed education and leather-bound culture. He bought books on the instalment plan. He gave these books, embellished with suitable inscriptions, to his wife for birthday and Christmas presents. In the course of the six years of his married life he had given her an Encyclopedia, four weighty tomes about the Wonders of the World, an Uplift Series in bibelot form and bound in parchment, an edition *de luxe* of "The Dream of Gerontius," the Princeton edition of translations from the Greek and Latin classics, Robert Louis Stevenson's Collected Works, and the late, lamented Mrs. Muehlbach's Historical Novels.

He was proud of his religious tolerance. Born a Hard-Shell Baptist, he had joined the Unitarian Church, and had persuaded his wife to join the same community though her people were High-Church Episcopalians. He called his wife's conversion a triumph for tolerance. Perchance he was right.

Every night, immediately after dinner, he would put on his slippers, and then he would read out loud to his wife: Browning, Conrad, Tolstoi, or Kipling; also some of the newer poets. He would interrupt himself from time to time to see if she had understood,

carefully explaining whatever he considered necessary.

At other times he would talk to his wife in an educational and strictly constructive monologue: about all sorts of things, and in a thin, pretentious jargon reminiscent of art furniture and Roycroft bindings. He talked a lot . . . and he talked with a terrible, corroding simplicity.

She would listen to him, her small, brown head bent over a bit of embroidery.

"Yes, dear . . . How interesting! . . . You don't say . . . I understand . . .," she would say at regular intervals.

And promptly at ten every night he would rise, walk up to her, kiss her, and say:

"Well, Nell, let's go to bed."

She would put away her embroidery and go to their bedroom, while he would look after the fastenings of doors and windows. Fifteen minutes later he would be deep in a dreamless sleep.

There was no doubt that John Thomson was a happy and a virtuous man. There was no doubt that he was a bulwark of simplicity, decency, sobriety, and the lesser virtues. He was a stanchion of civic perfection; a stout believer in unhyphenated Democracy, the Constitution, including all the Amendments, and State Rights.

It was early in the seventh year of their marriage that one evening he was surprised, on his return from the office, to see that Nell, contrary to the well-established habit, was not at the front door to greet him. He walked through house and garden, calling "Nell . . . Oh, Nell!" There was no answer. He went into the kitchen. But it was inhospitable, cold; there was no fire in the hearth.

A vague uneasiness came over Thomson. Again he called, with a louder voice; and then, next to a volume of Browning on the library table, he saw an envelope with his name on it in his wife's handwriting.

He opened it and read:

*Dear John:*

*I am going away from you, and I shall never come back. Never, whatever happens. I am sick and tired of this life. It is as drab and grey as a question in the Rule-of-Three. Do not grieve over me. You are a very virtuous man, and I am not worthy of you. I am going away with Charlie Bechter. I suppose you'll divorce me. I shan't defend the suit.*

*Good-by. Forgive me.* NELL.

*P. S.—I had to go. I can't help it, John. You do bore me so.*

Thomson passed his hand over his eyes. So she had run away . . . with Bechter . . . Charlie Bechter, the actor, who had come to his native town on a visit. But . . . why, he didn't understand . . . Charlie was no good. Everybody knew that. He had been twice divorced. There were all sorts of tales about him. Also, when had Nell seen Charlie? He hadn't been to their house . . . not once.

And Nell had been happy with him. He knew that. He had never spent a single evening away from home. Now she said that he bored her. But he had talked to her about interesting, beautiful, worthwhile things. He had read to her night after night. He had explained to her. He had been a model husband.

Then he told himself that it would be the right thing to lose his temper, to sear his heart into crimson rage, to destroy a few pieces of furniture, and to follow the fugitives, armed with murderous weapons. But at once he had dismissed the idea. What was the good of destroying the furniture? It was perfectly good, expensive furniture. And as to chasing after the two . . . why, he had no gun. He'd have to go to John Kelly's Hardware Emporium and buy one . . . and John would be sure to ask questions . . . then embarrassment . . . also the time lost . . . the office . . . why, yes, his work in the office!

He sat down to think. But ten o'clock came. He remembered that he had not eaten anything. He remembered that he must go to bed. He went to the kitchen and made himself a cup of tea and a couple of sandwiches. Then he went to bed and slept, quite a dreamless sleep.

The news of the elopement was all over town the next day. There were whisperings and embarrassed looks when, punctual to the minute as usual, Thomson sat down on his office chair.

The Boss came from the inner office, looked at Thomson, coughed, and then went back again without a word. The office boys walked about on tip-toes. When the stenographer handed him the morning's mail, she spoke in a low voice, as if in a sick-room.

Jerry Magruder was in his element. The romantic strain in his blood . . . for fat is not inimical to romance, the poets to the contrary . . . had already commenced to scream and surge, to weave stirring, gory, clanking tales of what the other would do.

"I know," he said to Carlton Betts in a stage whisper. "I have seen it bulge in his hip pocket . . . a gun, my boy . . . a six-shooter. There's going to be murder, believe me," he murmured with a delighted shudder. "Thomson is a dangerous fellow. He's going to follow his wife and the man . . . he's going to shoot them both." Then, with a magnificent flight of his imagination, "Betts, my boy, we shall all have to go to the inquest."

For the first time in his life, his colleagues treated Thomson with a certain amount of manly respect. At lunch time Betts offered him a cigar.

"Care for a smoke, John?" he asked.

"John" . . . not "Thomson."

But the other shook his head.

"Thank you," he said stiffly, "I never smoke."

He worked all day. He worked steadily, faultlessly, as was his wont, apparently quite unconscious of the sensation which his domestic catastrophe had caused. That same night he hired a servant, and the next day, as well as

the following days, he returned to his office at the usual morning hour. The others were intrigued, perturbed. Couldn't make it out. They shook their heads. But they accepted Magruder's explanation.

For Magruder was still romantic.

"He's going to wait, boys. He's going to wait till the two think that they are quite secure . . . and then there's going to be a drama. A drama! You just wait!"

They waited. But nothing happened. Thomson was as he had always been: clean, modest, efficient, ready to help. Even in the past he had been close-mouthed about his domestic affairs. He was so now. He never mentioned what all the town knew. So, gradually, the men in the office, the people in the town, began to despise him.

They would have forgiven him if he had made a scene, a scandal, even if he had killed his wife and Charlie Bechter. But they could not forgive him the calm acceptance of his Fate.

The idea of following Nell, of expostulating with her, of wreaking summary vengeance on the man, had never entered his head since that first night. He could not fathom the reasons why this terrible thing had happened to him. The situation was above his head.

In the evening, he would pick up one or other of his favorite volumes, and read. Once in a while a particular passage would bring the memory of his wife back to him. Then flat, grey thoughts would swirl up in his brain.

Why . . . he said to himself . . . they had been so happy together. There had never been the slightest scene, never even the faintest misunderstanding. And she had run away . . . with Charlie Bechter of all men; . . . Charlie Bechter, who was a rake and a drunkard!

He could not understand it; and least of all could he understand the postscript to Nell's letter in which she had told him that he had bored her so.

So he lived on as before, working, eating, reading, sleeping. Life, after

all, had not changed because his wife had gone away.

Only, in the course of time, he began to study himself, to dissect and to analyze himself. What had his wife meant by her postscript? How had he bored her? Was he not the same as other people?

He wondered. So he began to study the others.

There was Jerry Magruder. He laughed a lot; he joshed and joked, he gave and took riotously. Yes . . . but Jerry was a vulgarian. Then there was Carlton Betts . . . a gambler he . . . and it was the talk of the town that his wife and he had frequent rows and that once he had beaten her. Yes . . . but Mrs. Betts had not left her husband. Also she had borne him children . . . three strapping, rosy-faced youngsters.

It was the same thing with all the other married men whom he knew in the little town. Some were frequenters of bars, others were poolroom veterans, others still were "joiners" of innumerable lodges and worshipped the many merry vagaries connected with ruby-eyed emblems worn flauntingly in buttonholes. They all traveled the rocky path of sweetly unselfconscious vulgarity. He knew that in every respect, social and civic and economic, he was their superior.

But their wives seemed quite willing to remain mated to them. And his own wife? . . . She had gone off with Charlie Bechter, the actor.

He decided that there was something about the others, some subtle and obscure quality which he lacked. His wife, in the postscript to her letter, had given a name to the lack of this quality. She had told him that he bored her. But what could he do? Could he help it if his mind and his brain refused to flash forth into streaked, chimerical far-loomings?

Then, one day, he told himself that he understood. It was not he himself, he thought, who bored. It was life as a whole. It was the cramped, grey, jerry-built town where he lived, the

routine of his office, his colleagues . . . it was the milieu which was responsible. He was a part of it. He must cut himself away from it, clear away, and transplant himself into new surroundings.

He must go away. That was it. So he talked to his Boss.

"Is there a chance at headquarters . . . in New York?"

"I'll see, Thomson."

Four weeks later, he received his appointment to the New York office of the railway company which employed him. He left his home town without regrets.

Magruder, unsolicited, unwanted, accompanied him to the station. Back in the office, resplendently vindicated, he turned to Betts with a triumphant smile.

"I told you so, old top. Remember? . . . Thomson waited his time, and now's he's off to New York. I tell you I wouldn't like to be in his wife's shoes, nor in Charlie Bechter's either. You watch the papers. There is going to be murder."

But Thomson hardly ever thought of Nell, nor of the man with whom she had eloped. He was too busy fitting the little cog which was his Ego into the merciless machinery of the huge, poignant city. The work in the railway office was slightly different from what it had been in his home town. And Thomson was an efficient clerk, and a man who meant to get ahead.

So he became self-centred once more; and it was with a certain shock that he noticed how, once the excitement of packing and unpacking, of finding a flat, of getting used to his new office, his new colleagues, his new routine of work had worn off, he was settling once more into his old, drab frame, into the sober monotony of his former life.

Back home he had imagined that it had been the fault of his milieu. Now he made the discovery that milieu is not an external, but an internal thing, and that his own had followed him from the

little Middle-Western town straight to Broadway and Fifth Avenue.

The old monotony was about him again, close-knit, grey, steel-meshed. There seemed no escaping the Fate of it. Once more he was "Mr. Thomson" and "Thomson" to everybody; there was nothing changed about him. Only once in a while the recollection of the postscript to his wife's letter came to him like an evil, leering sprite.

Not very often though . . . he had his way to make. And he did make it. The Superintendent noticed his cool efficiency. His salary was raised.

So he lived for a year. He never heard from Nell, and never tried to locate her.

Then one evening, he went to a musical comedy which for some months had been the talk of the town. His wife danced in the front row. He recognized her at once. Her stage name was Dollie DeBeers.

That night, when he returned to his flat, he felt disturbed and uneasy. If his wife, abandoned by Charlie Bechter, had implored him for his forgiveness, he would have forgiven her.

He would have made a point of forgiving her every day of her life in well-chosen sentences.

But she was evidently successful. The smile on her face as she danced across the boards was not altogether the painted, stereotyped smile of the stage. And the diamonds around her throat, in her ears, and on her fingers, were costly. He knew that. He also knew that she had got on without him.

This knowledge thwarted the sense of his own importance, and cheapened the sense of his own virtue . . . which caused hatred.

The next morning he surprised his desk-neighbour by his loquacity and his many questions. The other laughed about it afterwards.

"Say," he said to another clerk at lunch, "that dried-up prune of a Thomson seems to be taking a post-graduate course in being a sport. Asked me a raft of questions about that little DeBeers girl over at the Comique."

"Did you tell him?"

"You bet I did." And he winked.

Thomson had listened to the tale with avidity. Nell had blazed a trail across Broadway during that one year which was a very decided record.

He did not feel the slightest pang of physical jealousy. He was hypocritically sorry for her. "Poor Nell," he forced himself to think . . . then, as an afterthought, "I bet she's having a good time."

The idea of seeing her, of writing to her, of communicating with her never entered his head:

And as to divorce? Why, no! He tried to convince himself that he did not believe in it. Always there was that hypocritical thought about "Poor Nell" . . . and always the leering afterthought "I bet she's having a good time."

He could not banish the picture of her from his mind. So, with the audacity of the timid, he made inquiries about her which were worthy of a Pinkerton man. He made friends with the ushers of the theater where she played, with the bell-boys and the porters of the hotel where she lived. He found out the last details about her life, her love affairs, her scandals, her jewels.

Frequently he went to the play to see her dance. When the run of the play was over he kept himself informed about her movements by reading the theatrical papers and magazines. Later, when she went on the vaudeville stage, he became a habitué of the music halls. And, since his salary and his modest private income were not sufficient to permit him the purchase of many theater tickets, he became an adept in the Broadway science of playing dead-head. As a logical sequence, this threw him into contact with many second-rate actors, chorus men, and other near-sports.

He did not stop there. For he was industrious and efficient. Soon he knew a few reporters, and presently he had a nodding acquaintance with some real, live daily dramatic critics.

So, gradually, he changed with his changing milieu. He acquired a different viewpoint, a different phraseology. The more festive among his office colleagues began to like him. They hailed him as a Sport, a Regular Fellow.

But he did not neglect his office work in the least. The Superintendent watched his career with interest. He spoke about him one day to the Division Freight Superintendent.

"I tell you," he said in his regrettably slangy manner, "that young Thomson's going to get ahead. He came here a regular bush-leaguer, straw behind his ears, and fuzz between his toes. Now he's joined the Big League. He knows his New York like a native. Kicks about a lot without dissipating, and keeps his work in apple-pie order. I guess I'll send him about town with the

next big Western shipper who blows into the office."

He did so.

Thus Thomson went ahead steadily. He never told anybody the secret of his marriage. But, in the course of occasional conversations, when the talk turned on the stage and, of course, on Dolly DeBeers, he would give many details about her age, her character, and other intimate things he knew about her through their married life.

And when his friends asked him how he happened to know so much about her, he would smile and wink.

"I've known her," he would say. "I've known her in the past . . . rather intimately, you know."

And he was speaking the truth.

For John Thomson was a virtuous man.



## SUMMER RAIN

By Amy Lowell

ALL night our room was outer-walled with rain.

Drops fell and flattened on the tin roof,  
And rang like little disks of metal.

Ping!—Ping!—and there was not a pin-point of silence between them.

The rain rattled and clashed,

And the slats of the shutters danced and glittered.

But to me the darkness was red-gold and crocus-colored

With your brightness,

And the words you whispered to me

Sprang up and flamed—orange torches against the rain.

Torches against the wall of cool, silver rain!



THE fact that love cannot last makes it no less exquisite a thing—in order to endure forever, it would have to be made of coarser stuff than dreams.



WOMEN are easily pleased. Consider the married men you know.



# HOW I SAVED MY HUSBAND

By Thyra Samter Winslow

THIS is the story of how I saved my husband. I saved him from being a social and business failure. I have never told this before. It is hard to tell now. Perhaps it may show others what a woman will stand without letting the world know and what she will go through to save her husband.

I was young when I met Breckenridge. Of course his real name is far more ordinary. Isn't it just like a husband to have an ordinary name? I was only twenty and I had only been out three years—short years of innocent girlhood pleasures, dinners, *thés dansants*, tangos, musical comedies, modern dramas, house parties, after-theater parties. My girlhood had been quiet, secluded. I had been abroad only four times. I was unused to the world. I hardly ever drank enough to become intoxicated; in fact, sometimes I didn't taste a single cocktail for two days at a time, and I liked only a few kinds of wine and smoked only a few brands of cigarettes. Even now, I never smoke before breakfast. So you see how innocent I was, how sheltered, how unable to cope with the world.

I met Jam—I mean Breckenridge—at a dinner. He had just got back from four years in the West with some sort of a mining company, I believe. He is still with mining or bonds or something. I can't remember the details. Business is a bore, isn't it? There was no one to warn me. My Mamma had just married for the third time and she and my new Papa-in-law were away on their honeymoon. If they had been there to warn their little girl! But they weren't.

My hostess whispered to me, just be-

fore we went in to dinner, "Marian, I am putting you with Breckenridge Cunningham (Cunningham isn't his name either). He's just got home. Has a lot of money." She meant well, but she didn't know the sort of a man he was, I am sure.

Breckenridge bored me with his tales of the West, but because I had been well brought up I pretended to listen. He didn't know about my sort of life, my simple little pleasures. That should have warned me. But it didn't. I just knew he was good looking and single and had money and I remembered that I had been out three years. How innocent I was!

Our courtship lasted three months. My dear Mamma got back from her honeymoon and hurried things up a bit. We were married in January and had a beautiful wedding and everyone said I looked lovely, though the newspaper pictures of me were horrid. The papers used the snapshots their old photographers took, even after we sent down perfectly good pictures, taken especially. We went South and had rather a nice time, though I don't like the mixed crowds at the Beach and made up my mind never to go again, though one must go some place in winter.

During our courtship I had noticed that Breckenridge was not like other men. On our honeymoon this feeling grew stronger. Back in New York, it continued to grow.

First, he objected to my smoking. I thought he was just a silly, trying to be funny, but I found out he meant it. He didn't think it was right for women to smoke. Imagine! Next, he said things about drinking. It was after the

Hunt Club ball. I had been having quite a good time with Ralphie Dwyer. We always had played around a bit together. Well, I did take a few drinks at the Hunt Club ball. I'll admit it. They had adorable things to drink. And I knew what I was doing all the time.

The next day Breckenridge scolded me, actually. He said that I had been drunk and had acted awfully and that Ralphie had carried me out to the car. Breckenridge said that my conduct was terrible, that *his* wife had to act differently, that I had to be quieter and stop cutting up with Ralphie, that people would talk, that—oh, I can't go over it all, even now. But he treated me, actually, as if I had been a grocer's wife.

That was the beginning. The next thing happened at supper, after the theater. One of the men was telling something about a girl, and then Breckenridge, my husband, turned to him and said, so that just anyone could hear, "Isn't it rather—questionable, all this? I tried to live, before I was married, so as to be worthy of some good woman. Now I shall try, at least, to be true to her."

I think those were exactly his words! I could hardly believe it. Everything went black before my eyes. My husband, to say a thing like that! Such taste! With Henry Delrose and Dick Lombard and Ralphie in the crowd! No wonder people stopped talking and looked at us both. The silence was awful. Everyone tried to change the subject but the party broke up. I never was so humiliated in my life. There was nothing I could do. I had been married less than a year. I didn't want a divorce—and yet—things like that—

It went on. Breckenridge objected to bridge playing for money. He objected to afternoon dances in the cafés. He didn't like my new clothes, though they were extremely good. Thin girls can look modest in a lot of things that fat women can't even try on.

Then, one night, Breckenridge came to me, after dinner. I knew that something was going to happen, for all

through dinner he was silent. He was, and still is, the kind of man who can't talk when the butler is around. We were in the library.

"Marian," he said, "I love you!"

Like that—"I love you," as if we were engaged or at a farce or something. Bad taste! But that was not all—nearly.

"Marian," he went on, "I want to take you away from here, away from this frivolous crowd. I want to take you West, to Colorado, where things are clean. We can have a home and servants and cars there. You'll have comforts. But we can have sunlight and friends—and children."

Children! Just as if I were the postman's wife. Of course, children are nice, when you're older—that is, pretty ones—and you can arrange to have their nurse bring them in at teatime and have them taught little foreign curtsies. It's really cute! But I've never been strong and Breckenridge hasn't enough money to make it necessary that we keep up the family. But to announce it that way—crude! To go West and have sunlight and children! And to Colorado, where the styles are months old and where they never have good shows and where no one knows the new dances until they aren't—and sunlight isn't good for my complexion. I tried to explain. But I knew, then, how he felt. I knew the kind of man I had married!

Others noticed Breckenridge's actions. The men at the clubs avoided him. I could tell that. Little laughing groups straightened up when he joined and talked war or business. His business associates didn't understand him. He never took anyone out but me and he was hurt, actually hurt, if I went with anyone but him. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know where to go for advice. My Mamma was still pretty busy, and besides, I couldn't confess even to her my shame and humiliation. It was something I had to work out myself. I still remember the sadness of those days.

Then, suddenly, the solution came to

me. If I could get Breckenridge interested in some other woman! If he would only quit caring for me with that funny, middle-class affection! That was it. I looked around our crowd. None of the girls was very charming. Not a single "vamp" in the crowd.

Then I thought of Lola De Frey. She was a dancer at one of the cafés. I never thought much of her, a coarse sort, with a funny round face and touched-up, reddish hair. She wore wild, expensive clothes, odd furs and funny jewels. The men were crazy over her. That was the main thing. So, though it was against my will, I sacrificed my finer feelings, my delicacy, to save my husband. I met Lola. I went with her. I asked her to my home. I introduced her to Breckenridge. At first he didn't care for her. He seemed to avoid her. I planned and waited. I had a house party and invited Lola and some of the old crowd. I watched and hoped and waited.

Finally, I saw my little plan work out. I had known that Lola could win. Gradually, I saw my old-fashioned husband unbend to her. He danced with her. They spent hours on the balcony.

I knew that Lola had charm, even if I couldn't see what it was. My little plan succeeded as I had dared hope. Breckenridge fell in love with her.

The others in the crowd never knew, never suspected. I had to stand their talk, that perhaps I had not been able to hold my husband. What did I care for their talk? My husband was saved! He soon took his place among men. He did things other men did. His club friends liked him. His business acquaintances treated him as an equal. To-day he is a popular man.

Lola? I do not know what became of her. Breckenridge has fallen in love with other women since. He dances, he plays cards. He does not bother about keeping early hours. He does not say boringly how much he loves me. We understand each other. He does not want to move to Colorado. And I am glad. Sometimes he looks at me with a funny, questioning look in his eyes, but that is all.

Our friends look upon our marriage as a success. We are both popular, sought after. But no one will know the kind of man my husband was when I married him, and how I saved him.



## AFTER READING IN A BOOK OF LOVE-SONGS

By John McClure

I WISH that some black god of aforetime would arise out of the earth and damn them

For their singing of women's beauty and quick passion and love's delight.

I wish that some black god of aforetime would arise and make wind of these things And scatter them like quick breaths off the page.

I wish that this would happen with the suddenness of death and disaster Because of the wild beauty of their songs.



A MAN falls in love with a woman for what he thinks she is. A woman falls in love with a man for what she thinks he will be after she has remodeled him.

## NOCTURNE

By Catherine Coll

A VERY subdued light came from the windows of the library, that room of imposing dimensions, running, outwardly unadorned, along the entire west side of the mansion. Without, the night was given over to the fitful repose of southern darkness, the unquiet solitude of waste, so full of tantalizingly incompetent sounds, so at odds with the vast indolence of the flashing day. The fresh smell of salt water filled the air, flowing all around, gathering fresh volume from the marshes and low-lying cornfields, hanging heavy in the innumerable coves and small curves and indentations of the river, rising and falling with the tide.

A whippoorwill cried—a faint and far-away protest against the stately murmur of a million insects. Frogs piped in the branch, the melody haunting, thin and vague, like the remote reed airs of pagan shepherds. A mocking-bird began to whistle. The lovely and poignantly significant music, the throbbing and trilling of the bird was

almost immediately dispelled. An owl screeched, and crashed heavily into a chestnut tree. A whiffling breeze sent down opaque flakes of mildew from the still cedars. A brake-cart, full of darkies, rattled by on the main road. They burst into uncouth laughter that died as they drove rapidly on their way.

Tranquillity followed their passing. The night advanced into the very depths of rest. A peaceful melancholy settled about the dignified home. All the twinkling, individual noises united and rose in one majestic hymn. The indistinct movement of growing verdure joined with the whisper of water-grasses; winged candles flashed incessantly; incense poured from voluptuous red roses; big moths, white and slothful, rose from the clipped lawn; bats flew through the shadows, deeper than shadow. Sublimity reigned. There was no gloom, no dejection in this profound solemnity, this gravely religious midnight rite.



## A SONG IN PROSE

By John Hanlon

I AM weary of songs of warriors bold and of tales of deeds that are mighty. They only tear my heart because I can never achieve them:

But, sing me a song of violet dusk among the birch trees, of half-breathed whispers of love, and the clinging arms of a woman. Then I shall understand and my heart will respond to your music.



# A PORTRAIT FROM TIN-PAN ALLEY

By John Hanlon

BY day, he sat at one of the many pianos in Tin-Pan alley,  
And played rickety accompaniments for simpering sister acts,  
For stalwart lady baritones,  
And *prime donne* from South Bend, Indiana.  
He ground out his music without feeling,  
With a bang, with a crash, entirely staccato,  
With even less subtlety than a hurdy-gurdy.  
To a trained ear the things he played were meaningless bundles of discords,  
And the lyrics would have given the Muse acute indigestion.  
Yet he seemed to think they were perfect.  
He would stop chewing gum for an instant,  
Gaze confidentially at the artiste who bent over him,  
And remark enthusiastically:  
"Some song that!  
Some lyric!  
Some melody!  
It's the greatest hit since 'Spooning in the Moonlight.'  
Last week, it knocked them off their seats in Trenton,  
When Little Agnes, the child wonder of Hoboken,  
Warbled it from one of the stage boxes.  
Notice, please, the punch in the chorus,  
And the beautiful heart interest in the verse.  
A marvelous single!  
A bully fine double!  
Arranged also in quartettes, sextettes, and octettes.  
You need it in your stuff to make your act a success.  
Professional copies furnished upon application.  
Some song that!  
Some lyric!  
Some melody!"  
Then he would hammer away again forte;  
And the aspiring Tanguays, and Franklins, and Calvés  
Would clear their throats and endeavour to produce notes  
More like music and less like the blast of a steam-whistle.

\* \* \* \* \*

But in the evening, after the pianos were closed,  
And the offices were left to the scrub-woman.  
He would not rush off with the rest of the staff  
To a cabaret or some roadhouse.  
His was a modest dinner at the Automat  
Where a dime in the slot promptly brought forth a ham and egg,  
A cup of more or less coffee,  
And the inevitable pie.  
Afterwards he would go and stand in the queue at the Metropolitan,  
Patiently waiting to be admitted to its sacred portals;

And he would weep as the pain-gnawed soul of Canio  
 Soared on the wings of rushing sound past the blasé throng in the boxes  
 Up towards the yearning few who huddled in the highest gallery.  
 After the agonising ecstasy of Caruso's "Vesti La Giubba"  
 He would clasp his hands together and say:  
 "Some song that!  
 Some lyric!  
 Some melody!"



## "THIS IS THE LIFE"

By Frank Pease

ONCE upon a time there were two little girls, sisters. Eventually they grew up. The eldest became a Suffragette. The other remained a Mere Woman. The Mere Woman married a mere man whom she loved. The Suffragette did not marry, but went forth into the wide, wide world and saw life. Finally she became a Great Leader and a Household Word. The Mere Woman stayed at home and merely had some children.

And it came to pass that the Household Word visited the Mere Woman, and said:

"But, my dear, what about your Freedom!"

The Household Word was *very* angry, for the Mere Woman merely laughed.



## THE WATCHER IN THE SKY

By Odell Shepard

SHE has grown pale and spectral with our wounds  
 And she is worn with memories of woe  
 Older than Karnak. Multitudinous feet  
 Of all the phantom armies of the world,  
 Resounding down the halls of centuries,  
 Have kept their far-off rumor in her ear.  
 For she was old when Nineveh and Tyre  
 And Baalbec of the waste went down in blood;  
 Pompey and Tamburlaine and Genghis Khan  
 Are dreams of only yesternight to her:  
 And still she keeps, chained to a loathsome thing,  
 Her straining, distant paces up and down  
 The vaulted cell, but wistful of an end  
 When all our swarm of shuddering life shall drop  
 Like some dead cooling cinder down the void,—  
 Leaving her clean, in blessed barrenness.





# THE SENTIMENTALIST

By Sara Teasdale

SHE had taught for seven years in a boarding-school for girls, and though she was not always patient, half of the pupils adored her. She watched their worship with an amused reserve that baffled them; and in spite of her sense of humor they thought her romantic—perhaps because her parents were dead and because she wrote short stories. The back numbers of the magazines that held her work were soiled with much treasuring. They had passed from generation to generation of school girls, but the delicate intensity of the tales looked to an older audience for appreciation.

One morning while she was dressing, she noticed three white hairs. She felt that they had come too soon—she was twenty-eight—and they made her a little bitter. After that, she saw them every time she arranged her hair.

It was some months later that she learned of a small fortune, her inheritance from a great-uncle. The news was as a sudden coming of spring to her. In the girls' eyes she was beautiful that day; life was waiting for her. She handed in her resignation for the fall term, and at night, when she met one of the girls in the dark corridor, she kissed her. It was a wonderful kiss—the girl never forgot it.

By autumn she had arranged her affairs and was settled in a small apartment in New York. Her short stories brought her friends, and both the men and the women liked her. She liked them equally, though she felt more at her ease with the women—she had known very few men in her life.

It was at the house of one of her new friends that she met a poet whose work

she had always disliked, though it had a certain fascination for her. His poems were cold and hard, with sudden touches of an almost cruel sensuality that made her think of a glowing coal cast into a bowl of ice. She saw him talking with the hostess before he entered the room. Neither his face nor his manner pleased her, and it seemed to her that in an unusual degree the man and his work were one. She was watching him intently when he turned, and across the intervening space, filled with men and women and the sound of voices, their eyes met. A feeling of resentment that he should have divined her glance made her join hastily in the conversation of those near her. But she was deeply conscious of his presence, which seemed to pervade the room, and to call to her almost audibly. When he was presented to her at last, she felt that love was in her eyes, and she blushed. He enjoyed the blush and sat beside her. They talked of his poetry, and moment by moment she asked herself why she loved him. It was characteristic of her that she immediately acknowledged this love to herself, and characteristic of him that he knew of her love as soon as she felt it. She wanted to like his voice, but she found it monotonous and unsympathetic—the voice of a man who has given little to life, and who has ceased to expect much in return.

Intense women pleased him, and he asked if he might take her home. The hostess whispered, as she helped her on with her cloak, that he had never done such a thing before and that he seldom went any place. She blushed again, and the hostess kissed her. He had al-

ready made her like a child, yet she realized that he took her home because she loved him—not because he loved her.

That night she read his latest book of poems through before she went to bed. She did not like them any better than before. They should have been bound in black and scarlet, she thought. When she finished them she looked into the mirror for a long time, trying to see herself with his eyes. She was sorry that her hair was not "red gold." He must like that color since he had used it so much in his poems.

After that he came to see her once a week with chilling regularity, and sometimes took her to dinner or to the theater. The week revolved around the day when he came. Everything in her life existed for the few hours when she was with him. Sometimes he sent her a note or two between his visits. They came often enough to make her always impatient for the postman.

One day in late March they took a long walk together in the park. The branches under the cold sky were feathery with the promise of new leaves. It was dusk and the lights were lit. Standing on the Belvedere overlooking the reservoir, they could trace the walks and roadways by their lamps like bordering chains of amber. He was less somber than usual, for the first warm day had brought back the ghost of his youth and made him gently sentimental. He told her that he was forty-one. He thought that she would be surprised, and was piqued when she said simply, "You are twelve years older than I am." She had thought him as old as that. Nothing that he had ever told her about himself surprised her. He had an uncomfortable feeling that she knew all of his weak points. She was too honest to flatter him, and he never had from her the boundless admiration that he craved. He was silent for a while, but the contrast of her fair skin and dark hair pleased him, as they always did, and he took her hand. Before she could draw it away, he felt a shiver run through her.

She had planned to go to Europe in the summer, but she let the weeks go by without engaging her passage, and ended by leaving the city for only a fortnight at the seashore. The fall and winter that followed were so much like the ones before that she sometimes wondered if the year had not slipped back. She tried to become interested in charity, and he listened with a bored politeness to her talk of Christmas trees and Christmas dinners.

In the spring, just as in the year before, a little wave of sentiment swept over him. He wrote verses to her, and even took the trouble to evolve a sonnet or two. But they never rang true, and the occasional touch of sensuality was so false a note that it hurt her. She knew that there was no passion in him. The battle between them was pitifully unequal, and when the little wave ebbed away again, his visits became evenly spaced as before.

In June she bought a small cottage at Ardeen in the Catskills. She wanted to be away from him—but not so far away as Europe. The voyage was postponed for still another year. With a methodical regularity he wrote to her twice a week, and when the letters came a tremulous happiness made her long to be friends with every living thing that she saw. The rest of the week existed only to bring the letter-days nearer. In spite of his lack of humor, he could talk well, if he were in a good mood, but his letters were uniformly brief and commonplace. They were like his stiff, regular handwriting.

When she came back to the city in September, he was at the station to meet her. She had not expected him, and when she saw him coming toward her in the crowd, a thrill of pain shot through her to the tips of her fingers. He took her hand and felt that it was cold through the thin summer glove. She found him looking at her critically. He was relieved to see that she loved him as much as ever. Her letters had been so light and whimsical that he had wondered if she might not have changed. He put her into a cab to drive

home alone. She waited impatiently for her trunk, and when it came she took from it the package of love-letters that she had written to him during the summer. She had never meant to have him read them. It was a little device to make the other letters easier for her. His look when he met her made her want to destroy them, and she put them on the ashes in the grate, and watched them smoke and blacken. It was the first autumn fire.

The monotonous weeks began revolving again around his visits. It was two years since she had met him, and she asked herself if this was the life that had waited for him. He came sometimes wet with rain and sometimes powdered with snow, and when three hours had passed he went out into the rain or into the snow, without a regret at leaving her. At Christmas the usual package of books came. Each one bore the greeting that he had written in his gifts of the years before. His way of repeating the same action week after week and year after year was maddening to her. She wondered what he had been fifteen years before. Had passion always been for him only a subject for art, a thing of his brain?

They walked together in the park when the days grew warmer at last. She would have been glad to escape the spring, but the seasons are pitiless and full of memories. One of their walks in the silvery May twilight brought them again to the Belvedere. In the great buildings that loomed far away over the trees, windows were lighted here and there. She saw them—the buildings were full of homes. He was absently watching the park lights change from amber to white as it grew darker. Neither of them spoke. When he turned toward her from the long chain of lights, he saw that she was crying without making a sound. A little wave of tenderness made him take her in his arms. He kissed her and his face was wet with her tears. Her mouth was convulsed with weeping. He half regretted that, and yet it made the sensation more novel. He kissed her again

and again. She grew quiet, and he took off her glove and kissed the palm of her hand. It was damp against his lips. Suddenly she drew away from him and ran into the twilight. He hurried after her and took her arm, trying to speak to her as a lover would speak. But he saw that he failed. She seemed scarcely able to stand, but she walked on, looking straight before her and never speaking—not even when he left her at the door.

When she found herself in her room, she sat down on the bed to draw off her glove. She looked for a second at the palm of her hand, and then she laid it against her lips. It was a long time that she sat there. After several hours had passed, the tumult of her thoughts receded, leaving one voice that had the insistence of a cry. She felt that life was possible to her only on one condition. At last she got up, turned on the light and found pencil and paper. She did not know what she was going to write, but after the first sentence there was no hesitation, and she wrote rapidly: "You know that I love you. Tomorrow morning I am going to my cottage at Ardeen on the early train. Come to me there. You need not stay long—only come to me. You will not have this letter until after I have gone, but you can take the second train. You will come—for a little while." She put the paper into the envelope, stamped it, sealed it, and directed it to him. Then she looked for her hat and jacket to take the letter to the post box. They were still on. She had not taken them off since she left him.

A boy carried her suit-case from the station at Ardeen to the cottage, and when they reached it, the cold, dead air of the closed house made her feel faint. She tried to open the window while the boy laid a fire, but she had to ask him to help her. At her order he went to get some provisions, and left her alone. She sat down in the chair before the fire. When he came back, she tried to eat a piece of bread from the loaf that he brought, but

though she had eaten nothing since noon the day before, she could not swallow a morsel. Everything in the house was exactly as she had left it except for a delicate coating of dust. In a vase were sprays of withered wild asters that she had forgotten in the fall. She looked up at the shelf where the clock had stood idly during all the winter. It had stopped at a ridiculous hour. She wound and set it, and it began to tick. She sat down again. The light fire had gone out. She watched the clock so closely that she could see the minute-hand move with little jerks. She was shivering, and she remembered a shawl that she had left in the cottage. It was in the bedroom. She went to the door and opened it a little way—then suddenly she turned as though she could not enter it, and came back to the black hearth.

air, she heard the whistle of the train that had left the city at ten o'clock. She went to the window, though she knew it would take him twenty minutes to walk from the station. A feeling of terror took her. She could scarcely stand, and she went back to the chair. She put her hands over her eyes so that she would not look towards the window. Her heart was beating madly—the throbs were like blows. She counted the ticks of the clock. They grew louder and louder until she felt that they were deafening her. By their terrible insistence they seemed to be measuring eternity. She felt that she had been counting them forever.

There was a step on the veranda—the heavy, hurried step of a man. She reached the door and opened it. An overgrown boy stood there with a telegram. It read:

Like the swinging of a sword in the

*"Sorry cannot accept your invitation.  
Sailing for Europe next week."*



## A MOOD

By David Morton

**T**ODAY the world has been too great a place:  
 Brave wars and winds and whirling stars are there.  
 Tonight I want the solace of your face,  
 The soft and somber beauty of your hair.  
 For I have been too long where dwarfing skies  
 Drowned me in distance or in vasty gloom,  
 And now I want the quiet of your eyes,—  
 To feel you near me in this little room.

Tomorrow!—Ah, tomorrow I shall be  
 Once more a part of all earth's ways and wars,  
 Eager for strife and striving mightily  
 Bearing brave banners up against the stars.—  
 But not tonight.—How strange I am, and old.  
 And you, how dear.—Give me your hands to hold.



**W**HEN you find a woman who knows the difference between a Manhattan and a Bronx it is well to be careful: she probably knows a great deal more than that.

## MOTHER-LOVE

By Mildred Focht

THE nurse was embroidering to keep herself awake. It was a warm spring night; the heavy odor of lilacs stole in through the open windows of the ward, and made a path of fragrance across the hospital atmosphere of antiseptics. Now and then a moan or a restless movement came from the double row of shadowy white beds. "How is Rosie to-night?" The house doctor had come in noiselessly on rubber soles.

The nurse jumped up. "Just lies there and stares at the ceiling, doctor. Here's her chart."

"Hm," said the doctor, studying the paper. He walked over to the nearest bed, and looked down gravely.

The desk telephone rang. In a moment the nurse came over to him.

"Rosie's mother, doctor; may she come up?"

The doctor pulled his beard thoughtfully. "Rosie's mother—yes, tell her she may come."

The nurse returned to the desk and telephoned softly. The doctor continued to look down gravely at the white face and wide, expressionless eyes.

In a few minutes there was a shuffle of feet in the corridor, and a woman entered, very ill at ease—a large, stupid-looking, shapeless woman, such as scrub floors in office buildings. She stared about dazedly, with a foolish grin.

"I like I should see my girl—" she said, blinking, and twisting her red, distorted hands. The nurse rose and went toward her. The woman gained confidence.

"I tell my man I don't come. I say it is too far when all day I scrub floors.

I like better I should lie on the bed. But my man he say I should come, so I can know my Rosie gets better. She gets better, huh?"

The doctor moved aside. "Here she is," he said.

The nurse resumed her embroidery. The mother shuffled to the bed, and sat down heavily at its foot, staring at the girl. The doctor stood watching. Presently the girl's white lips moved.

"Think you'll know me the next time you see me?" she said in a hoarse whisper.

"Ach, Rosie, why must you be sick? Maybe you lose your job, and what we do then I don't know." The mother sighed deeply, shaking her head.

"Aw, don't chew the rag about that," said the hoarse whisper. "I give you every cent I could while I was workin'. Ain't it fierce?"—the girl turned her eyes to the doctor—"all these here foreigners thinks about is money. She—"

"Better not talk any more now." He laid a quieting hand on her forehead. She threw it off with unexpected strength.

"Ain't it fierce—" she cried out huskily, quivered and lay still.

"All over now," said the doctor slowly. The nurse laid down her embroidery and set about composing the body. "Come, you must go now," he addressed the mother, a hand on her shoulder. "It's all over; Rosie is dead."

The woman stared at him blankly. "Rosie is dead," he repeated a little impatiently. "You must go now." He turned to the nurse. "Get her away before she begins to scream."

The woman rose slowly. "All right, I go now," she muttered. Urged by the

nurse, she moved heavily toward the door. Suddenly she broke out in a low animal-like whimpering.

"I don't like my Rosie should be dead," she moaned. "She was a good girl, my Rosie was; always she gave

her poor old mother the pay envelope. I don't like she should be dead."

The door closed upon her. The doctor began to fill out the death certificate, while the nurse came back and resumed her embroidery.



## DORIS

By John Hall Wheelock

THE thought of you is woven through the Springtime  
Like a grave minor in the pæan of joy;  
I cannot see the Spring and quite forget,  
Nor is the Springtime any more the same.

You were the tenderness of her wide hills,  
The patient longing, and the wistfulness  
Of all her tremulous blossoms on the air  
Gently unfolded for the first, sweet time—  
Her trustful loveliness in frail appeal.

Each year repeats my sorrow but anew:  
When Autumn darkens o'er the solemn lands  
To me it is as if again I see  
Upon the face the most beloved on earth,  
The rapture once and Springtime of my dream,  
The first, sad lines of shame and sorrow there  
Stealing its whole brave loveliness away.



## CONGÉ

By J. R. McCarthy

YOUR eyes, my dear, are too blue and honest-looking:  
I am afraid of them.  
I have fallen for these blue and honest-looking eyes before.



SORRY, indeed, the woman with large feet. If she wears her skirts short, everyone sees them. And if she wears her skirts long, everyone guesses at them.



THE good are so careless! They are always getting caught at it.



# THE MURDER OF JULIUS K. HIGGINS

By Maurice Bowman Phipps

WHEN I was arrested for the murder of Julius K. Higgins I was rather surprised and not a little annoyed, for I was extremely busy, and, until then, business had not been coming my way for quite some time. My surprise was natural, too, for I had never heard of Julius K. Higgins, and I felt, and not without some show of reason, that it was quite out of the question to murder a person of whom one had never heard. That only goes to prove, however, that none of us is infallible, for when I arrived at the police station I found that really I was technically guilty of the murder of this unknown Higgins.

It happened in this way: One Saturday noon, after the hottest, stickiest week I can remember, I was just about to close my desk and hustle for the twelve-forty-five so that I could help my family slap mosquitoes over Sunday, when the door opened and the most unprepossessing individual I had ever encountered shuffled in. I took a violent, and perhaps an unreasonable, dislike to the man from the very first instant. Neither the dandruff on his collar nor the unmistakable evidence on his coat that soup had been a means of sustaining life some time in the past, served to raise him in my estimation; nor did the pale aura of stale beer and staler cigar stumps which emanated from his person.

He said that it was a hot day. I agreed with him. He had called upon me, so he said, in the hope that I might be interested in a patent device which he was selling; a device, he went on to explain, for keeping unwelcome visitors out of busy offices. I pointed out the

very obvious fact that had I possessed one of his devices and had it behaved in the manner he claimed it would, it was most unlikely that I should ever have had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He replied that my argument just went to show how valuable was this invention; he was not a proud man.

It was at about this point in the conversation that my eye chanced to fall upon the spindle which I keep on my desk and upon which I intend to impale all my receipted bills. I picked it up and looked at it in a purely mechanical fashion, for it was an object with which I was perfectly familiar. I afterwards had some slight difficulty in convincing the sergeant at the police station that the idea of plunging the spindle into the man's heart did not occur to me at that moment. But I am positive about the facts; I killed him and it is only natural that I should be the one to know when and why the idea seized me.

I had no thought or desire to kill Mr. Higgins, for later the police told me that that was his name, until after he had abandoned his attempt to interest me in his patented device and had returned to the weather as a topic for conversation.

He said that he supposed that I had found it hot enough for me the past few days. I did not answer. I am, usually, of a kindly disposition and I did not wish to hurt his feelings with the only reply which was possible for me, at that moment, to make. I fancy that had I answered him he would have left the office immediately, and, in so doing, would have saved his life. It is useless, however, to speculate upon such

things. I did not answer and he stayed on.

It was when he told me, in strict confidence, that it was not the heat he minded but the humidity that I decided to murder him, and to murder him at once if I did not wish to lose the twelve-forty-five.

I remember crossing to where he sat. He seemed a bit surprised and rose to his feet. I placed the point of the spindle on a spot beneath which I thought his heart might be, and then, by a sharp blow with the palm of my hand, drove it home.

He said, "Ouch, what are you doing?" I said, "I am murdering you. I hope it doesn't hurt you much."

He said, "Not very, but I don't know why you should do this." I said, "I haven't time to explain or I'll miss the twelve-forty-five."

He then lay down on the floor and died. I looked at my watch and was greatly annoyed to see that it was then twenty minutes past twelve. It was Saturday, as I have already stated, and I did not wish to leave the man's body there in the office until Monday, but I had no time to dispose of it. Fortunately, just at that moment, the public stenographer, whom occasionally I employ, stepped in.

She said, "Who is that on the floor?" I said, "I don't know his name, but he is a man whom I have just killed with this steel spindle."

She said, "Why did you kill him?" I said, "He told me that it was not the heat he minded, it was the humidity."

She said, "Oh." I said, "Will you do me a great favor?"

She said, "I will if I can."

I then told her that I was afraid I would miss my train and asked her if she would see that the man's body was

removed. She said that she would. I thanked her and hurried away.

I went down on the train with a man named Allsop, whom I know slightly, and it is quite possible that I mentioned the affair to him, but of that I cannot be certain. We talked golf, I know, most of the time. I did not say anything about it to my family because I did not think that they would be interested.

It was not until the following Thursday that I was arrested, and, as I have stated before, I was a bit puzzled because the warrant for my arrest was made out for the murder of one Julius K. Higgins, and I knew no one by that name. It did not occur to me that the man I had killed in my office the previous Saturday and this Julius K. Higgins were one and the same person. The police sergeant explained that they were, however, so that mystery was cleared up.

The sergeant then wished to know why I had murdered the man, and I told him, just as I have set it down here.

He said, "So the late Mr. Higgins told you that it was not the heat that he minded but the humidity?" I said, "Yes."

He said, "You are sure about that, are you?"

I said, "Mr. Higgins, if that was the person's name, after asking if it had been hot enough for me and getting no reply, went on and explained that it was not the heat that he minded, but the humidity. He seemed to feel that he was, in that respect, unique."

I was then discharged and, as I left the station-house, I heard the sergeant reprimanding the officer who had sworn out the warrant.

"It is too hot," I heard him say, "to pay attention to every trifling misdemeanor."



SOME men who claim that they never speak to an inferior probably never met one.

# THE THEORIST

By Seumas Le Chat

HE was of those who are hot blooded about the abstract and cold blooded about the concrete. Women interested him enormously and unemotionally. They loved him easily, bored him still more easily, and fascinated him more than anything in the world; but he really didn't care for them at all.

The things that interested him made his speech passionate, but the things he loved lived in a white lucidity of silence. He progressed somewhat violently through the world, encircled in varied haloes of misapprehension. He leapt forcefully and sure footed from one nebulous peak of wrong impression to the next and, having a steady head and a slightly upturned regard, he never saw the gulfs between, nor the people whom his friendship sometimes knocked into them.

He made love eloquently, because it was natural to him to talk well on subjects that interested him, and that he understood thoroughly. For therein lay the crisis of his relations with women. They loved him because they did not understand him and he failed to love them because he understood them entirely. This, at least, was his own view and, as he knew himself extremely well considering that he lived in an age of intellectually myopic introspectives, we should be justified in accepting it if his conception of love itself were at all universally acceptable. But it is not. For, to him, all love appeared to be nothing more or less than the desire of the unknown—the continuous intriguing of the infinite—the perpetually unfulfilled dawn of adorable advertising. "It is nonsense," he would say, "to suppose

that he who meets love unveiled dies, or is near to death. It is true death is near. But it is love who dies. He dies of the cold and glare of the Larren room. He dies of analysis like a flower in the hands of a botanist. Remember Psyche and believe only in what you cannot see. Love is a butterfly of the dusk—the dusk of strange lands. Do not seek for him in the crude daylight of explored countries. He lives in torn rainbows that trail before your eyes and are snatched away . . . in comets' tails that dazzle and are gone. . . . You may glimpse him poised on the opening rose of a dream . . . fluttering beneath the falling petals of a vision . . . trembling through the mist of a tear . . . quivering in a breeze of laughter. . . . Pursue him, but never explain him. Chase him—chase him always—over the edge of the world but never seek to touch him. . . . The caught butterfly is but a little white dust and a broken wisp. . . . Possession is death."

And for this man Love lived in the ice-blue mists of the abstract far from the warm egoisms of women. Sometimes he despised himself for his interest in women. He knew so well their limitations, their narrow asphyxiating emotionalism, their materialism, their eternal personalizing of the abstract.

The very vitality of his interest in them seemed to plunge him into a correspondingly active weariness with their outlook. He was in one of these rages of boredom when he met the woman whom he did not understand.

She was frail and elusive as a snowflake. Her eyes were full of silver shades and dusky lights. Her voice

was a crooning brook that suddenly eddies into a spraying ripple. To him she seemed a bird stirring in sleep. . . .

In support of his theory he fell in love with her. For the heart of a true theorist is as much under the influence of his theory as is his brain. What baffled him about her was that she, too, loved a form of the abstract in the way in which he had come to believe no woman could. Afterwards she loved him, too, but that altered nothing. . . . Each decided that the other was an etherealization of the concrete and therefore infinitely inexplicable.

They were floating together into the golden clouds of perfect happiness on the wings of this further proof of his theory when he met the woman who understood him. . . .

In some way her personality was like a Beardsley drawing. A subtle decadence hung around her. A sort of indefinability of moral anatomy producing an effect varying from an austere mysterious attraction of caducity to a sort of sensuous fascination of yielding. . . . A mind that seemed to wear nudity not unconsciously, but with self-possession. . . . A complete but not a pagan lack of conscience. . . . She was like a fragment fallen from the end of the nineteenth century and greatly enhanced by her incongruous environment. For to achieve striking personality it is only necessary to be born out of one's century, more especially if one belongs essentially to the death of one decade and is born near the birth of another. . . . Dull red wine spilt on dawnlit snow—orchids clinging to the white feet of morning. . . .

There was about her a curious sense of having ruled her own perversity—as though a flower should say: "I will be curious rather than beautiful—I prefer the hothouse to the open air." She seemed to radiate a voluntary almost sane abnormality. She was bathed in

an emanation of cynical tragedy. Hers was the sadness of decaying joys—the enveloping melancholy which is the *crêpe* a temperament wears for a moral sense slain by the miasmas of a too-complex civilization. . . .

The man found in her the apotheosis of the charm he had always found in the study of women. He wanted to watch the workings of her mind—to prophesy and see his forecasts fulfilled; to forestall her thoughts and be justified. Already his sensitive mind had caught the drift of her complicated psychology. . . . He was absorbed in her for the moment, and the moment is life.

In a week he had lost himself in the amazing obliquities of her glance, and his life was darkened by the grotesque shadow of her fashionable silhouette. In a month he was kissing the rouge from her lips, his honor was strangled in the coils of her careless laugh and his happiness lay dead beneath her feet. He understood her now, as he had known he would—as he could never understand the first woman, or she him.

Between the first woman and himself lay love, as dead as happiness, and before him through the broken gate of his life stretched the sterile plain of the future. He stood at the parting of their ways with her who had done all this. A great weariness was upon him.

"You do not love me—" he said as one who recapitulates the foundations of the universe. She laughed, "As little as you do me." Grey mutual understanding and satiety brooded over them as heavily as a pall.

His dead love stirred suddenly in his heart like a moth of flame and ice.

"You did this because—" he questioned stilly.

Her downcast eyelids fluttered—she smiled: "Perhaps as a final proof of your theory," she murmured. . . .

. . . In the silence Time shrugged his shoulders. . . .



# LA MONTAGNE ENCHANTÉE

By E. G. Perrier

**A**U pied des Alpes, dans une cabane de berger, habitaient Gardic et son vieux père.

Gardic avait dix ans alors et c'était un gamin joyeux et vif, aimant courir les sentes et les ravins, bondissant de roc en roc comme un chamois en liberté.

Les contrebandiers et les montagnards l'aimaient à cause de sa tête blonde et de ses yeux bleus, et parce que nul mieux que lui ne connaissait les passages étroits entre les roches et les cavernes où l'on peut dormir en paix, à l'abri des fauves et des gabelous.

Gardic c'était le bon gémé de la montagne!

Devant lui la tempête fuyait, n'osant écheveler ses boucles folles, et le torrent lui-même, qui roule ses cascades de dentelles, apaisait ses flots et chantait comme un ruisseau dans les prairies! Jamais l'avalanche n'avait barré sa route, jamais le vent d'hiver n'avait grondé sur son passage et les aigles, du fond du ciel, le voyaient venir et s'effaieraient . . .

O le vaillant petit homme que c'était!

Cette gloire aurait dû lui suffire! Il aurait dû se contenter de voir fleurir pour lui les aubépines et les bruyères, et de courir les sapinières! Quand le printemps venait, tous les oiseaux, toutes les fleurs lui faisaient fête, et il était roi vraiment, roi de la forêt et de la ravine, car nul autre que lui n'osait aller où il passait!

Hélas! Gardie, le pauvre enfant, s'était endormi un soir d'automne au pied d'un chêne et il avait fait un rêve miraculeux: les lutins de la montagne, les fées toutes blanches qui logent dans les neiges lui étaient apparus et l'avaient entraîné vers les sommets dans leurs

demeures de cristal . . . Par des sentes fleuries d'eldelweiss, il était monté, monté toujours, monté plus haut, si bien qu'en étendant la main il aurait pu cueillir au ciel des bouquets d'étoiles! Et ses yeux éblouis avaient conservé la vision superbe des grands pics étincelants dans la splendeur du crépuscule, et ses oreilles étaient pleines encore du bruit troublant que font la brise sur les névés et le vol des vautours dans les nuages!

Et depuis lors, dix fois, vingt fois, par les ravins en lacets, par les pentes inaccessibles, il avait usé ses ongles à tenter d'escalader les cimes . . . Une invincible attraction le guidait vers les hauteurs, vers les moraines, où nul arbre ne pousse plus, où seul se joue le soleil sur le tapis d'étincelles des glaciers . . .

Pauvre Gardic!

Un jour enfin, à force de patience et de ruse, il put vaincre le précipice et s'élever jusqu'aux sommets . . . O le paysage enchanté! Il éclata de rire et battit des mains, et se mit à chanter de toutes ses forces comme les pinsons, ses amis, dans les forêts des bas plateaux . . . Car voilà bien les pics farouches et les blanches aiguilles qu'il avait vu luire dans son rêve, et les roches étincelantes où flamboient les cavernes argentées des lutins! Là-haut, tout là-haut, indécise dans le ciel bleu, une cime se dresse, immaculée, si haut, si loin encore, qu'on dirait une vapeur flottant dans la brise, prête à se fondre au moindre souffle! . . . Et Gardic, pris de vertige, monte, monte encore, monte toujours, car il a reconnu la cime audacieuse sur laquelle la fée des montagnes a bâti son château fragile! . . .

Tout à coup un gouffre s'ouvre et

barre le chemin; la nuit approche et le froid est vif, et le soleil à l'horizon se couvre de nuées épaisses . . . Gardic cependant chante encore et rit toujours, et il veut monter quand même . . . Il n'entend pas, derrière lui, sonner les grelots des lutins qui roulent des roches sur les pentes . . . Il ne voit pas leurs ombres légères se glisser, ramper, former un cercle et l'enserrer dans une ronde échevelée . . .

La cime, là haut, est si jolie!

Mais en vain hélas! les montagnards et les contrebandiers ont suivi ses traces sur la neige . . . En vain son père éploré gémit et l'appelle. L'écho seul répond à leur voix, l'écho farouche de la montagne.

Et les lutins, dans la nuit qui vient, tournent toujours, tournent plus vite, et l'enfant, dont les pieds saignent, et qui ne rit plus, implore envain la fée de son rêve . . .

La bise se lève et les loups accourent, et le précipice est là, sous ses pieds tragique, attirant, comme une gueule ouverte qui épie une proie.

Alors Gardic a peur et veut redescendre . . .

Mais l'ombre l'enveloppe, l'aveugle; les choses autour de lui ont une apparence fantastique . . . Une grosse roche noire sur laquelle il s'appuie bouge et culbute, et il entend sa chute terrible dans la vallée . . . La crête elle-même, secouant sa tête, a l'air de danser dans la nue . . .

O épouvante!

Gardic pousse un cri et ferme les yeux. Et il reste là, immobile, retenant son souffle, les mains crispées contre le roc . . .

Alors un éclat de rire strident résonne dans la nuit!

Vaincu! il est vaincu, cette fois, l'enfant chéri de la montagne! Au long d'une arrête vertigineuse la ronde des lutins l'a acculé et maintenant, suspendu sur l'abîme, il n'a plus qu'un pas à faire pour mourir.

Et Gardic n'ose écouter, n'ose comprendre, mais la ronde farouche s'accroche à sa veste, le pousse, l'attire . . .

Oh le cri qu'il pousse!

Dans le ciel profond, l'aigle réveillé se plaint longuement, la bise gémit dans les vallées et les montagnards se signent pieusement car tout là-haut, dans la montagne, un chœur magique a retenti: le chœur des lutins, tueurs d'hommes, qui culbutent de joie dans la neige et chantent l'hosanna de triomphe!

Et quand viendra l'été prochain, quand les aubépines et les bruyères auront fleuri, peut-être qu'en fouillant les mousses, sous un amas d'herbes plus hautes, on le retrouvera endormi, pâle et sanglant, les yeux au ciel, celui dont la voix savait si bien rire et dont la brise aimait caresser la tête blonde: Gardic, le pauvre berger, que n'éveilleront plus les gammes joyeuses des cascades ni les chansons du rossignol!



## PREMISE

By H. Thompson Rich

LET our love be for a cup,  
To drink deep of memory with—  
Afterwards.





## SLAPSTICKS AND ROSEMARY

By George Jean Nathan

IT is the custom of the respected dramatic critic at least once a year personally to recall with a great show of wistful affection this or that performance of a day now long passed into the star-haunted attic of memory. The performances thus still vividly recollected with a mellow, head-shaking pathos are in general associated with the names of Lester Wallack, Ada Rehan, Lotta Crabtree, Mary Anderson, Ellen Terry and, in the instance of the very young critics, Edmund Kean, Farren, Macready and Rachel. Only the other day, indeed, did my esteemed colleague, Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton, lament typographically the thought that Charlotte Cushman was no longer with him (and us) to dazzle the boards with her still brilliantly remembered talent. And, of course, it is almost impossible in the *Evening Post* to distinguish which is the dramatic department and which the obituary.

Although not yet old enough to wear rubbers when it rains, I too am able from out the past to conjure up the still trenchant pictures of celebrated mummies of another day. Not a few of those the mere thought of whom is sufficient to extract a tender tear from my brothers' eyes, mine eyes, too, have rested on. Noble artists some of them, I venture; yet my theater, alas, was to be the theater of another epoch. I envy, indeed, the critical perspicacity and precocious powers of analysis that were enjoyed by Mr. Eaton while he was still in kilts—we are practically of an age—but I am forced into the unprofessional admission that, at ten or thereabouts, I was a not particularly reliable critic of acting. I recall, for in-

stance, merely that Mary Anderson had the sniffles at the matinée when first I, yanked thither by my governess, saw her and that she seemed to be almost as pretty as my mother in her newest ball gown. And my chief lingering youngster's impression of Duse as Tosca is of a sort of Theda Bara. For a truer estimate of that actress's celebrity I am therefore constrained to study such of my colleagues as the enthusiastic Mr. Woolcott of the *Times*, who—though considerably younger than I—was apparently already a sophisticated and not unexcellent critic while I was still yelling whenever the family tried to wash my ears.

My boy memories of the theater are vastly less informative, vastly less dignified, memories. In place of the probably edifying exhibition of acting given (circa 1877) by Miss Rose Coghlan as Clarissa Harlowe, I somehow seem to recall more lucidly Della Fox rolling down De Wolf Hopper's extended legs in "Wang." In place of what was unquestionably a fine bit of acting by Tommaso Salvini in "La Morte Civile" (circa 1889), I seem to remember the toboggan in the second act of Hoyt's "A Midnight Bell." And in place of some probably admirable work by Booth and Barrett, it would appear that my acuter recollection is of the funny scene in "The County Fair" where Neil Burgess dressed up like a woman shocked the country folk when he leaned out of a barn window upon the lower half of which a billposter had pasted the legs of a chorus lady in tights, and of an awfully cunning girl in Henry V. Donnelly's stock company named Sandol Milliken. I do not re-

member very much about John Hare's doubtless first-rate performance which I saw at the Garrick overseas in 1890 or about Richard Mansfield's doubtless memorable performance in "Don Juan" which I saw the following year in the Garden Theater, New York (I was just nine then), but memory lights up at the mention of the unknown actor in a twenty-three melodrama called "The Ensign" who, in the role of an unpolished American seaman, facing the modish and contemptuous British villain on the deck of a United States man-o'-war, boomed in the fellow's teeth: "We ain't got no manners, but we kin fight like hell!"

And so, too, does rather memory quicken at the mention of Franz Ebert, the tiny comedian of a troupe known as "The Lilliputians," at the trick scenery of the Byrne Brothers' "Eight Bells" and Charles Yale's "Devil's Auction," at Charley Bigelow and Lillian Russell in "The Princess Nicotine," at Digby Bell in "The Tar and the Tartar," at Cora Urquhart Potter's wonderful brown hair and Thomas Q. Seabrooke in "The Isle of Champagne" and my first sight of Denman Thompson and the scene where E. S. Willard mixed up the name Lucy with the letter he was dictating in the first act of "The Professor's Love Story" (I was about fifteen then) and Katherine Florence's make-up in "The Girl I Left Behind Me" and the exciting fire-station scene in "The Still Alarm" and a very bad play named "Gloriana" (which I then admired) and Camille D'Arville in "Madeline or The Magic Kiss" (they gave away, I recall, pictures of Miss D'Arville on celluloid buttons as souvenirs) and Robert Downing's biceps and the minstrels Barlow and Wilson and Virginia Earl as the lunch counter girl in Hoyt's "A Hole in the Ground" and Gus Williams in "One of the Finest" and Gladys Wallis and . . .

And a burlesque show containing Watson, Bickel and Wrothe and called "On the Yukon" in the old Star Theater of Cleveland, Ohio, some two decades and a half ago.

Indeed, I do not know but what, among all my early memories of the theater, this memory of a twenty-five-cent burlesque show isn't quite the most energetic. A distressing fact, surely, and one most profoundly lacking in official solemnity, yet a fact at once eminently frank and proportionately certain. The Bickel I have never forgotten: he is to me at this late day still the funniest low comedian on our stage. Nor the show itself have I suffered to fade. I laugh at it yet as memory echoes its primitive, but withal positive, Elizabethan unities of slapstick, bladder and squirt-gun. A droll masque, if ever there was one; its humors broad of girth, its mien robustious, its cabotinage simply killing. And thus came it about recently, upon reading my twenty-nine and thirty year old colleagues' fond memories of Shakesperian performances given in Daly's forty years ago, that I, too, looked me backward upon the tender rosemaries of my boyhood, summoned again unto my fancy the ne'er to be forgotten reminiscences of days now long gone into lavender and, so mellowing, sought again to evoke the past with all its sweet keepsakes theatrical, all its affectionate recollections. Two nights I gave over to a reunion with my retrospects: one at the very Daly's ever so proficient in distilling the homesick critical tear; one at the Columbia Theater. And jolly good nights, in faith, were they!

Here were the good old days all over again—particularly at Daly's, where the stage is now given over to no less a band of troubadours than "Joe Freed and His Heart Charmers," as the billing is. Who Joe is, I know not; but his show, believe me, is a topper. True enough, it should, in the vernacular, be pulled—it is somewhat more *calorique* than the Russian Ballet or "Homo Sapiens" or even Mr. Belasco's "Marie Odile"—but, posture as you will, it is full of more rowdy guffaws, more loud porpoise snorts, than any show I have seen in seasons. In the first place, the two comedians are named August Beerheister and Heinie Hopslinger, which

is in itself sufficient to indicate the vasty promise of the evening. Mr. Beerheister wears a pair of enormously spacious trousers and a diminutive brown pancake hat while Mr. Heinie Hopslinger, in view of his obviously Teutonic nomenclature, treasures a clever surprise for the audience by appearing in Hibernian make-up. Thus equipped, the comedians march down to the footlights, take a good look at the spectators and then, facing each other, proceed, in the most ludicrous manner you ever saw, alternately to crack jokes and each other over the head. Observes Mr. Beerheister, "So you iss a member uf der union?" Whereupon his colleague thus: "Don'd you call me a onion"—*squat!*

The roguish persiflage ended, Mr. Beerheister decides to call up 000 nutting on the telephone and invite his lady friend, May Rose, over from Hoboken to dine with him. Miss Rose enters immediately, seats herself and calls for the menu, to which Mr. Beerheister aptly rejoins, "Uf course, me 'nd you!" Miss Rose, in adjusting herself, has draped her skirt over one knee and Mr. Beerheister, in bending down the better to observe the lady's exposed limb, falls precipitously off his chair. Mr. Hopslinger, with a saucy grimace, has meanwhile become a waiter and bids the fair one order. "I'm not hungry," draws the lady, "so you may bring me merely a couple of oyster cocktails, some Horace Dovers, a planked shad, a nice big thick porterhouse steak with French fried potatoes, a salad or two, a slice of cramberry pie—and a cup of coffee." But, protests Mr. Beerheister fanning himself with the dinner card, forasmuch as he has with an infinite drollery been surreptitiously counting his funds while the lady has been ordering and has found himself possessed of but thirty-eight cents, "ain't you forgotten something?" Whereupon the lady, suddenly recollecting, retorts oh yes and orders Mr. Hopslinger to fetch her a bottle of "Pommeroy brute."

Mr. Hopslinger meantime has gone over to telephone the order to the chef

and has suffered a discharge of flour in his face from the aperture in the instrument. While he is yet wiping the flour out of his eyes, Mr. Beerheister, somewhat impatient, approaches the 'phone, seizes the receiver, shouts "Hello" and is most jocosely flooded by a stream of water. Mr. Hopslinger by this time has contrived to brush the flour off his countenance and, walking to the hotel desk, gaily drinks the ink, wiping his mouth with the blotting pad.

Approaches now an elegant gentleman in evening clothes, coat fastened in front with a loop. The two comedians contemplate the splendid fellow in awe as nonchalantly he counts over a huge roll of bills which he holds in his yellow chamois gloved hand. Presently, the elegant gentleman drops one of the bills and Mr. Beerheister falls upon it. "What!" thunders the elegant one in a pink tenor, "would you demean yourself for a paltry one thousand dollar bill?" Mr. Beerheister, arising, is properly ashamed of himself. "Oh," says he, "I didn't know it was a poultry bill." "Anyway," observes the elegant gentleman, "it has now been contaminated from contract with the germs on the floor." Whereupon he calls "Boy!" and when in response a chorus minx in a toga of transparent green gauze appears, bids her gingerly carry the bill off and throw it in the ash-can. Mr. Beerheister promptly makes off after the hussy. "Where is you goin'?" inquires Mr. Hopslinger. "If you wanta find me, you kin haf me paged at th' ash-can," calls Mr. Beerheister over his shoulder, thus not observing whither he is going, bumping with a thud against the side of the proscenium and landing emphatically upon what he drolly describes as his "roundhouse."

At the Columbia, nothing less than "The Golden Crook Extravaganza Company" and—mind you—with Billy Arlington! Here the two comedians are of the hobo gender and are named respectively Prince Oswald and Dudley Dustswinger. Both are clad in amazing pants sustained by a single suspender, and undershirts. Prince Oswald wears

a frowzy stove-pipe hat; Dudley Dustswinger a felt bonnet garnished with holes. The scene, according to the playbill, is "the reception room of the Midnight Club," an institution that resembles murally a holiday box of Riker's candies. The comedians come down to the very edge of the footlights, Prince Oswald bearing a stalk of celery. "You know, Oswald, I seen a lot o' monkeys in m' lifetime, Oswald, but you ain't like a monkey at all, Oswald. Monkeys is *intelligent* animals." Zowie goes the celery in Mr. Dustswinger's face! "You have grocery insulted me," retorts Mr. Dustswinger, eating the celery. The scene darkens and an actor made up as Satan appears in a red light. "Who are you?" inquires Prince Oswald. "I," responds the other in sepulchral tones, "am—the—devil." "Oh, is *that* all?" drawls the Prince, "then go ter hell." The evil one, paying small heed to our comedian's whimsy, bids of Mr. Dustswinger his greatest wish. "I wish fer a beautiful woman to love me," replies Mr. Dustswinger, not unintelligently. "So be it," says the devil. "Look!"

Mr. Dustswinger, with an undulating mazurka of the neck, follows the devil's finger and observes, in the open window, a girl in pink tights. "Is she real?" he asks. "See for yourself," suggests his Satanic Majesty. Mr. Dustswinger approaches the window with a great show of timidity and, by means of a couple of pokes, satisfies himself of the lady's actuality. The devil pulls the curtain. "Aw, Mr. Devil, please let me see her again," beseeches Mr. Dustswinger. "So be it," reiterates the other—and again the window-shade is raised and again the now beaming Mr. Dustswinger reassures himself of the vision's reality by coyly pinching the vision in the leg. The devil, however, brushes the impudent Mr. Dustswinger aside and draws the curtain. "But, Mr. Devil—good Mr. Devil—won't yer please let me kiss her just onct?" implores Mr. Dustswinger. "So be it," again from the other and Mr. Dustswinger rushes to the window, pulls up

the shade and kisses—Prince Oswald who has sneaked off unobserved during the colloquy and taken the vision's place.

The comedians now get out a banjo and a violin. The taller of the two, Prince Oswald, who wears the stove-pipe hat, seats himself with the banjo and crosses his long legs high above him. Dustswinger, violin to chin, stands beside his chair. The lights are lowered and they begin to play the venerable sob-siphon from "Cavalleria Rusticana," Mr. Dustswinger drawing out to its full every sad note and employing the return trip of the bow to push the stove-pipe hat off his colleague's head. It subsequently develops that Prince Oswald is possessed of a consuming thirst and craving for liquor. But he has only two cents. "Hello, Sam," he says, moving toward the barkeeper; "I'll betcha two cents I kin drink a glassa whiskey quickern you kin." The wager is laid. Prince Oswald pours himself a gigantic beaker and the great contest is on. The barkeeper finishes his small glass at a gulp. Prince Oswald continues drinking slowly until the last drop is gone. "You lose," says the barkeeper. "Well, kin you beat that!" exclaims the Prince, giving the audience a cherubic wink. Enters now our genial friend Dustswinger with a jug. "Fill this up," he orders the barkeeper. The latter fills the jug. Dustswinger starts to make off without paying. "Here you, gimme back that jug if you ain't goin' to pay," commands the barkeeper, taking the jug rudely from Mr. Dustswinger and emptying it of its contents. "But kin I have the jug back?" questions Dustswinger humbly. The barkeeper gruffly thrusts it back in our friend's hand. Whereupon our friend, with a ludicrous nudge at the audience, takes out a hammer, breaks open the jug, extracts a sponge and treats himself to a fine tippie.

It is now Prince Oswald's turn and, coming confidentially down into the footlight trough, he whispers to the audience how he used to love his beautiful school-teacher, how he brought her

a little peach as a present one day, how she took him on her lap and thanked him, how he next brought her a big apple and how she took him on her lap and this time not only thanked him but kissed him—and how he then began saying up to buy her a watermelon!

And so it goes. The dear old quartettes in the purple Prince Alberts still sing about the River Shannon and the good-old-U. S. A. The comedian still dances with the fat lady, one hand on her neck, the other debonnairely on her bass-drum. The society lady still interprets her lofty social status with a wholesale and not entirely discriminate use of "whoms," and lorgnettes the presuming comedian into a humiliated silence by proclaiming that he is "beneath content." And every time anyone comes out to exude a sentimental song the lights are still dimmed and the spotlight is still turned on. But vulgar if you will, the laughter is still there in these roughhouse masques—more laughter than you will find in a year's round of the loftier music shows which have substituted a Broadway and Forty-second street species of what they call refinement for the honest old shirtsleeve stuff of the Miners. If, friends, you want to renew the days of your boyhood, the days when all you actually knew about Ada Rehan was that her picture came in packages of Sweet Caporal cigarettes and could be traded with the neighbor's kid for one of Corinne in tights (provided you added a couple of agate marbles and a slingshot)—if you want to live those days over again, go to a burlesque show. I believe they have them still even in Boston.

The best thing about George M. Cohan's "Revue of 1916" is this very quality of boyish bladder-burlesque with which he has perfumed his buffoonade. Mr. Cohan is ever successful in efforts of this species because he frankly addresses himself to the youngster in us. He knows just as well as you and I that we will laugh harder and longer at the spectacle of a pickle-herring smearing shaving lather all over another pickle-

herring's face, neck and ears, poking some of it in the latter's eyes and then licking it off the fellow's face and eating it than we will laugh at, say, any two dozen alleged verbal witticisms of the average modern day librettist. And he knows equally well that we cannot for the dignified life of us refrain from laughing at the ceremony of the zany who, in making his lordly adieux, trips over the mat and lands kerplunk on his etcetera, so he includes the stratagem in his harlequinade along with such of its sister stratagems as the comedian who tumbles out of his chair in his attempt to get a better view of the contents of a lady's stocking (*vide* Joe Freed and His Heart Charmers) and the amorous old beau who flirts even with the small statue of Venus (*vide* Al Reeves, et al.).

There are, in a general way, but two grades of emotion in a theatrical audience: the fifteen-year-old emotion and the thirty-five-year-old emotion. The first is the quality of the music show audience; the second the quality of the drama audience, at least in some communities, if not in New York. (In New York, to be regarded as at all successful a play must make its appeal to the majority. It so must reflect that majority's attitude, opinions, philosophy, thought. And at least four out of every five such persons believe that bock beer has got something to do with a goat!)

It is a ridiculous enterprise to attempt to cater to the thirty-five-year-old emotion in the music hall. The music hall is the play-ground of youngsters, whether they be youngsters in fact or youngsters with beards matters not. And George Cohan realizes the truth of it. Accordingly, in his show, he provides us with all the things we relished in the days when we all broke our front tooth on the candy called "Iceland Moss" and scratched our pencils on slates to see the pigtailed beauty at the desk across the aisle shiver. Cohan is the Peter Pan of Broadway. And so in this latest burletta of his, he gives us again the actor dressed up



in a dog outfit that we clapped our hands at in the pantomimes in the long ago, the Judge of the court who uses his gavel as a drumstick and, when summoning the court to order, raps out a rat, tat, rat-tat-tat on the bench, and all the complemented loved ones of our boyhood. But, more than this, he has negotiated in this particular revue what amounts to a genuinely clever and entirely compelling *reductio ad absurdum* of the conventional modern musical comedy, employing for his purpose such devices as the use of the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 in the place of the equally unimportant words of the average song-show lyric and—as a climax—a youngster of ten to do effectively all the patriotic song business and hair-tossing dances out of which the Honourable George himself has made a fortune.

Mr. James K. Hackett, with Miss Viola Allen as co-star, has been appearing at the Criterion Theater in a play by Josef Urban called "Macbeth," in some measure seemingly a plagiarism of the play of the same name by William Shakespeare. Here and there in the presentation the similarity to Shakespeare's well-known tragedy is such as to provoke a nod of recognition on the part of such acuter persons as are able to decipher the fuddled enunciation of Mr. Hackett's support, though in the main the play is unmistakably an original extravaganza designed primarily to exhibit the new art of scenic painting and the still newer art of incompetent acting. The plot of Mr. Urban's play follows in a broad sense the celebrated Thaw case and details the manner in which a pretty, pouty, droopy-eyed wife (played very sweetly by Miss Allen) goads her vacillating husband (Mr. Hackett) to kill the man whose sinister presence stands in the way of their mutual fortunes and happiness. Evidently with a view to lessening the obvious journalistic mien of the piece, Messrs. Hackett and Urban have laid the scenes of the play in Scotland and England in the eleventh century.

The latest playwright to endeavor to impersonate Mr. James Forbes in the matter of equipping Miss Rose Stahl's dubious talents with a suitable theatrical conveyance is Mr. George V. Hobart. The adventure is named "Moonlight Mary" and amounts merely to a re-writing of Mr. Forbes' "The Chorus Lady" with a deft elimination of all of Mr. Forbes' humor. In the stead of the Forbes humor, Mr. Hobart has inserted some of his own peculiarly excellent brand, the evening accordingly consisting of an extravagantly mirthful audience with jests on wrist-watches, let-George-do-it, grape-nuts-there's-a-reason, are-you-a-neutral-no-I'm-a-Presbyterian, do-you-know-the-vernacular-no-who-is-he, I'm-writing-a-serial-I-never-did-care-for-those-breakfast-foods, and the-porter-was-awfully-nice-and-friendly-he-held-out-his-hand-after-he-had-carried-my-bag-and-I-shook-it.

At the Booth Theater, and several weeks since departed, was made visible a melodrama programmed as "The Fear Market" by Amélie Rives (Princess Pierre Troubetzkoy). The play (dramatic composition) employed as its theme (topic on which one writes) a *cause célèbre* of several years (period occupied by the earth in revolving around the sun) ago, in which was brought to light (agent or force in nature by which we see) the machinations (artful plots) whereby so-called society journalists (conductors of public journals) obtained money (medium of exchange) from gullible (easily gulled) members of the modish (fashionable) set. The melodrama (drama abounding in romantic sentiment and agonizing situations), while not without a certain piquant laboratory interest (excitement of feeling) was of a wholesale perisology (loquacity) and was bald in conception (formation in the mind of a notion) and procrastinating (to delay unduly). Miss Rives (Princess Pierre Troubetzkoy) would seem to be more suited to the forms of the novel (a lengthy piece of fiction) than to the forms of the stage (platform upon



which theatrical entertainments are given).

Of "Margaret Schiller," upon the stage in the New Amsterdam Theater, suffice it to say that it was written by Mr. Thomas Henry Hall Caine. The connotation is, patently, an empty, senseless *comédie larmoyante*, in this particular instance treating of a young German woman who, for purposes of revenge, insinuates her delectable person into the household of the British Prime Minister as governess and, on the eve of potting the Prime one, falls a victim to the Cupid light in his eyes. Mr. Caine remains still unchallenged the leading impresario of plummy bosh in the Anglo-Saxon literature.

The resident impression upon leaving the Cort Theater after witnessing the play "Any House," by the Messrs. Owen and Robert H. Davis, is of having kissed a girl for two and one-half hours running. What is initially not at all a bad idea is spoiled by a serialized sentimentality, a gourmand wrestle with the key of B-flat. The work has its moments of interest and, to boot, a novel and engaging scenic notion, yet its thesis has been deleted of potential virtues by a philosophical attitude that has the air of a "mother ballad" rendered by an Hawaiian quartette. The theory of the authors that the average man's struggle is against his worse self as opposed to his better self is, to say the least, debatable. The tragedies of such a creature's life are assuredly more usually born out of his sentimental, soap-hearted being—that irresistible side of his nature which, in crises, he finds it difficult, if not impossible, to anti-nietzsche. There was valid material here for an amusing play. But a sighing pen (whether Mr. Owen Davis' or Mr. Bob Davis' I know not) has punctured it.

Miss Grace George's repertory company is currently presenting "The Earth," a play of journalism from the hand of Mr. James Bernard Fagan.

Whether or not the original manuscript has been altered by the Playhouse deities, one is unable to know. Yet if this is the play as Mr. Fagan wrote it, the fact obtrudes that the gentleman has conceived a most unconvincing piece. Whereas no clear motive is assigned for his newspaper owner's stubborn hostility to the wages bill campaign of his secondary protagonist, it follows that much of the platform pother baffles the hopeful decipherer. The balance of the manuscript consists chiefly of a re-phrasing of the love motif of Henry Arthur Jones' "The Liars." Miss George's troupe gives the manuscript a much better treatment than it deserves, though it might not unreasonably be asked of Mr. Louis Calvert that he do his directress the courtesy of memorizing some of the better lines of the play, at least. Miss George herself is pleasing in the central petticoat role.

"The Melody of Youth," by Mr. Brandon Tynan, is the conventional ward-guardian story laid in the theatrical idea of Ireland in the 1830's, a probably somewhat dolled-up Ireland of cherry-trees in Unitt and Wickes bloom, spotless satin knickerbockers, mauve twilights and gayly singing birdies. The piece is of a highly caramel order and replete with moist allusions to blue skies and golden sunshine. In all probability, however, I constitute a very poor critic of plays of this schoolgirl sort. About one act of such pieces is all I can stand. I therefore advise you to read nothing I write of them.

And so again we come back, after an audience with these lack-lustre groupings of our serious stage, to the things of our first pages, to the music halls wherein we may find most of the amusement that, from another point of view, is so rarely provided us in our more grimly visaged playhouses. And so we come to the new clownage at the Winter Garden, with the grinfal Mr. Albert Jolson at the head of the picnic. A colorful carnival, a gay evening, a show to please the intellectuals!

# THE PUBLISHERS BEGIN THEIR SPRING DRIVE

By H. L. Mencken

## § 1

ON JOURNALISM.—A lot of good-humored (though, at times, somewhat wistful) spoofing is to be found in "THE SERIO-COMIC PROFESSION," by L. J. de Bekker, of the *New York Evening Post*, but in its title, after all, is the best of its flings at the dolorous trade of writing for the press. That title describes journalism exactly. Your true journalist, at his noblest and most earnest, never quite rises to the dignity of a genuine professional man; he is always a bit of a comedian, a quack, a mountebank, and the fact that he commonly takes himself with deadly seriousness does not change the fact, nor even conceal it. The cause thereof, I daresay, is inherent in the very nature of his work; it demands that he deal readily and oracularly with a range of subjects quite beyond the capacity of any single human intellect. The result is an ardent cultivation of mere facility, at the expense (and even to the conscious disparagement) of all sound and well-ordered knowledge. The typical newspaper copy-reader (who is the archetype of the journalist) not only knows very little that is worth knowing; he actually regards it as somewhat affected and absurd to try to augment his stock. This explains, on the one hand, the amazing cocksureness of the newspapers, and on the other hand their abysmal ignorance. In the United States, at all events, they are content to shine forth with a speciousness and hollow smartness, and their point of view is frankly that of

the mob orator. In Europe one finds a greater timorousness, a more willing dependence upon authority, a more unashamed respect for culture. But in the United States the stress is laid less upon what is acceptable to the mind than upon what will pop the eye. It is not a year ago that a dictated reference to the Beaux Arts went out upon the wires as Bozart, and so got into scores of American newspapers. It is not a month ago that a journal which boasts of being one of the oldest and most respectable in the United States transformed Richard Wagner into "Carl Maria von Wagner, the famous German poet." And how the gods are made gay daily by journalistic treatises upon taxation, military strategy, finance, police administration, penology and international law! . . .

Mr. de Bekker's book, however, is not so much a satire against journalism as a good-humored pasquinade upon journalists. He is one of them himself, and he understands accurately their glorious lack of logic, their boyish enthusiasm for the trivial, their heroic energy, their incurable romanticism. Journalism enlists thousands of men of vast force and genuine talents—enlists them, binds them upon its wheel, whirls the breath of life out of them, and then throws them upon its scrap-heap. To find a match for the crazy fidelity that it engenders one must go to religion or war. A true journalist is half a Jesuit and half a trooper in a Grande Armée that shoots its stragglers. He roars through the incomparable twenties, drags himself through the thirties, and

is then left in a ditch at forty year. . . De Bekker is old enough to begin to see the tragic farce of it, and to squeeze out a sentimental tear. He says on his title page that he has been in the game for twenty-five years, and probably stretches the facts very little. I worked with him seventeen years ago (we covered, in competition, a terrain which included a third of Baltimore, three rowdy suburban towns and the whole Chesapeake Bay littoral), and he was even then so far gone in the craft that he wore a Latin Quarter beard, rolled cigarettes with one hand, carried a walking stick two inches in diameter, and composed hymns to Pilsner, then still an exotic and actually known only to James Huneker and a few others. Even in those days of his nonage he stood a bit apart from the procession; he had a veneration, for example, for sound music, and scandalized police stations with garglings of the sword motive. That aloofness, no doubt, explains his capacity for seeing journalism somewhat objectively, and, per corollary, the charm of his little book. It is to be lamented that more such books do not come out of newspaper offices.

## § 2

*The Red Cross.*—In "MARXIAN SOCIALISM AND RELIGION" (Huebsch), John Spargo takes 187 pages to prove that Socialism is not antagonistic to religion, nor even (to make a distinction not intended to be invidious) to Christianity. A labor, surely, of supererogation, but one given some show of excuse by the Socialist war upon ecclesiasticism, and by the misconceptions arising therefrom, particularly among the ecclesiastics put to the torture. Nevertheless, a labor of supererogation still. Socialism and Christianity, in fact, are but facets of the same gem, and the doctrines actually preached by Christ were much nearer to the doctrines preached to-day by the more intelligent Socialists than to the doctrines revealed by the practice of

any existing Christian church. At the bottom of Socialism and of pure Christianity there is exactly the same idea, to wit, that all men are equal before the Lord, and both address themselves to restoring the alienated rights of men of the more feeble and incompetent sorts, and to putting them, by that process, on terms of equality with their betters. I cannot imagine a genuine Socialist dissenting from the Beatitudes. In their insistence that there is not only no discredit in weakness and unsuccess, but even a high and rare sort of virtue, they state his creed to the letter.

The only real difference between Socialism and this theology-purged Christianity is that the former demands the realization here and now of what the latter merely holds out as a promise of reward beyond the grave. In other words, the Socialist accepts the Christian theory of human values literally, and demands that it be put into effect at once. He thus rejects resignationism in this life, which, by reason of its superiority to Christian democracy in practical feasibility, has forced the latter aside, and appears to-day as almost the only philosophical content of Christianity. But in what they actually get, as opposed to what they demand, the Socialist and the neo-Christian are still brothers, for both, despite their theoretical right to an equal share in all the delights and usufructs of existence (and even to a lion's share as a make-weight for their past and present deprivation) are forced by a harsh fate to put up with a good deal less. Each philosophy embodies a scheme of rectification and a scheme of revenge. The Socialist is buoyed up, not only by the hope of getting what he thinks belongs to him, but also and more importantly by the hope of punishing the fellow who now has it, and who is trying hard to hold on to it. By the same token, the Christian is heartened and made happy, not only by the firm belief that his present going without will be stupendously compensated in a life beyond the grave, but also by the soothing

ing confidence that those who are fat, prosperous, sinful and happy here will have to go to hell for it when they die. . . .

I speak here, of course, of Christianity in its pure form, and not of any definite Christian church. All the Christian churches that have attained to any actual position and influence in Christendom have had to yield something to the bitter facts of life. That is to say, they have had to wink at inequality, and some of them have even gone so far as to assume its inevitability and to woo its beneficiaries. This is only saying, of course, that pure Christianity is essentially impracticable—that, whatever its theoretical truth, it will not work. Socialism collides with the same difficulty. It is based in theory upon an idea of complete equality, a negation of caste, of authority and of vested right, but in practise it has to make various compromises. In the present book, for example, we see Mr. Spargo, a very intelligent Socialist, engaged in a deliberate effort to still the fears and cultivate the good will of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. I venture to believe that he will fail. In so far as he argues that religion and Socialism, as philosophical schemes, are not antagonistic, he merely says what is obvious, but when he tries to show that religion as organized politics and Socialism as organized politics can lie down together, or even exist together, he tackles a hopeless task, for the church *qua* church is always a snob and a tyrant, and this is true of the left wing as well as of the right. The Catholic Church, in its palmy days, was never more despotic than the Scotch kirk, nor, for that matter, than the Methodist Church in the least civilized parts of the United States to-day. It is, indeed, a sound instinct which ranges the vast majority of Socialists and trade-unionists against the Puritans who now seek to force their views upon the whole population under cover of the law, for prohibition and Sabbatarianism, in their essence, are quite as subversive of the lower man's rights and happiness as conscrip-

tion, the Inquisition and the *droit de seigneur*. . . .

But, be this as it may, I think you will be interested by Mr. Spargo's book. I am no Socialist, God knoweth, but I always read him gladly and with profit. His Socialism lacks the crazy extravagance of the French brand; he mingles it with English caution and hardheadedness. It is such leaders that the Socialists must listen to if they are ever to get anywhere.

### § 3

*A Novel of Distinction.*—One finds in "THE MAN OF PROMISE," by Willard Huntington Wright (*Lane*), the precise group of qualities that distinguish the average American novel by their complete absence. That is to say, one finds a graceful style, a delicate and accurate sense of form, and an intelligible and interesting idea, competently worked out. Superficially, the thing suggests the method and point of view of John Galsworthy, say in "The Patrician" and "The Purple Flower," for there is on the one hand his scrupulous and a bit hard workmanship and on the other hand his contemptuous attitude toward the sentimentality of ordinary fiction, and no less of everyday life. But there is no sign of direct imitation, nor even of appreciable influence. Mr. Wright has plainly thought his thesis out for himself, and devised his own investiture for it. The result is a novel that, after the other novels of the day, with their maudlin idealism and emotion-monging, seems almost arctic in its restraint and remoteness, but that still leaves upon the civilized reader an effect of poignant drama, and even of tragedy. There is a touch of the Greek spirit in it. It makes its appeal, not to the tear ducts and the midriff, but to the centers of reflection, and even if it falls a bit short of its apparent aim, it is yet full of sense and dignity.

The idea underlying it is simple, and, at bottom, obvious enough, though Nietzsche's voicing of it brought down upon him the abuse of the pious. In

plain words it may be conveniently stated thus: that the influence of women upon a man of any force and originality, far from being inspirational, is often intolerably hampering, and that in this business of holding him down what are called good women may be quite as inimical to him as what are called bad women. Stanford West, the hero of the fable, is a young American of inquiring habit and intellectual audacity, a fellow whose "obscure inner necessity" (as Conrad calls it) moves him to question some of the dearest *principia* of his day and race, and moreover, one with enough capacity for plausible utterance to do his questioning in a manner that arrests attention. But whenever he sets out for the field of battle he finds a woman hanging about his neck. First it is his mother; the rebellion that he raises at college (against academic numskullery and poltroonery) fills her with shame and grief, and he retreats to give her peace. Then it is his first mistress, the love of his youth; her demand for caresses stands between him and that indefatigable labor which alone can get him anywhere. Then it is another mistress, the ordinary type of preying woman; her crude harrowing of his emotions leaves him exhausted and almost hopeless. Then comes his wife; she, like his mother, shrinks from the social odium that goes with revolt, and he descends to facile novel-writing to gratify her vanity. A chance of release follows; he runs off with a woman who seems to be the rare miracle, the woman unlike all other women. But this delusion, of course, soon yields up its kernel of bitter truth: the miracle is hocus-pocus, the immemorial arms are around him still. In the end we see him make his final sacrifice to his daughter. In order that she may have her chance in the world, he surrenders his own, putting security above self-expression. As we part from him he flops into a chair in a fresh-water college, a safe man at last. His wife, triumphant, sees only contentment in his smile of tragic irony. . . .

Such is the story in its substance. It is worked out with quite unusual ingenuity and earnestness. There is, indeed, almost too fine a finish upon it; West's doom pursues him with an inevitableness which, in life, might be supposed to be tempered with more of the fortuitous and the incomprehensible. The drama is developed, in brief, in a manner that is just a shade too cold and scientific; it is, as a document in psychology, somewhat harshly well-made, as the plays of Scribe were well made, on the side of mere intrigue. But this, after all, is merit as well as defect, for the thing that the current American novel most sorely needs, even above that uncompromising honesty toward which Dreiser and his (very remote, alas!) followers show the way, is a more thoughtful artistic selection, better rhythm and organization, cleaner form. Our novels too often wobble and turn upon themselves; they show a woe-full lack of plan; they are as full of chaos, discord and meaningless ornament as a block of dwelling houses in an American city. Wright, with his sounder æsthetic training, has laid out his book with more skill and sophistication. There is in it an agreeable air of the studied, of the imposing, almost of the symphonic. (First movement; West's mother and the two loves of his nonage; second movement, the melancholy *andante* of his marriage and of his days of surrender in London; third movement, the false *scherzo* of his flight with Evelyn Naesmith; *finale*, his disillusionment, his return to America, and his tragic collapse and defeat.) It is a novel that is straightforward, vigorous, earnest, young. The writer himself is still full of the divine sincerity of youth, and, reading him, one scarcely needs to be told the fact. At fifty, perhaps, he may feel moved to recast it in places, as George Moore recast "Evelyn Inness." He may ameliorate it, condition it, mellow it. But even as it stands, it hangs together admirably and deserves genuine respect. There is no hint of conventional charlatanism in it; it is enthusiastic, zealous,



ardently thought out. Such novels are too rare among us to be lightly passed by. . . .

## § 4

*More Fiction.*—Of the other current novels, the most workmanlike and interesting is "THE STRANGERS' WEDDING," by W. L. George (*Little Brown*). This George is the man who wrote "The Making of an Englishman" two years ago, by long odds the best novel that England has produced since H. G. Wells' "Tono Bungay," and perhaps a shade the better of that. "The Strangers' Wedding," it may be said at once, is not its peer, but nevertheless the book reveals many excellences and amply confirms my view, hitherto expressed in this place, that George is the coming man in England, and will go beyond Wells, Bennett and the others of that group before he has lived ten years longer. At the moment, almost alone among the serious novelists of his country, he shows no sign of being demoralized by the current phobias and malaises. The easy opportunities of emotional journalism have not wooed him from his proper business; he is still writing novels, and not breathing red fire and chlorine in the penny press. Kipling it at the one end of the literary file, snuffing and sticking out his tongue like a small boy who has been birched. George is at the other end, an unruffled artist and a self-respecting man. . . . Is it merely a coincidence that he grew up in France, and is in truth, spiritually speaking, more than half a Frenchman?

"The Strangers' Wedding," in its essence, is an exhibition of the plain fact, so obnoxious to democratic sentimentalists, that the barriers of caste are very real things, and that the man who tries to knock them over can only come to grief. Roger Huncote, a young Englishman of good family and university education, goes into an East End social settlement to help uplift and unsettle the lower classes. There, taking his own sophomoric *flair* for the

unwashed too seriously, he enters upon an idiotic marriage with Sue Groby, the daughter of a laundress. The thing, of course, is a failure from the start. It is quite as impossible for Sue to become a lady as it would be for a moving-picture actor to become a philosopher, and poor Roger, on his side, finds it utterly beyond him to get used to breakfasting daily with a woman who is not. In the end Sue solves the difficulty by eloping with one Bert Something-or-other, a fellow of her own tastes, traditions and station. As for Roger, he hunts up Theresa Underwood, who has employed a fork correctly and distinguished clearly between don't and doesn't since her sixth year. . . .

The story lacks something of the fine penetration and gusto of "The Making of an Englishman," perhaps because the transactions it sets forth are inherently less interesting than those of the other book. When George showed his young Frenchman's transmogrification into an Englishman, not only externally but in inmost thought and feeling, he showed something that was new to fiction and full of highly diverting odds and ends of reflection and revelation, but when he takes 442 pages to tell us that the Huncote-Groby marriage was a failure he merely tells us something that we understood the moment we heard of it. Even the details bear an air of the familiar, almost of the inevitable. One knows without being instructed just how such alliances go to pot. Moreover, the dénouement is stereotyped and hence banal, for the adulterous flight has been a commonplace of English fiction for years, and one finds it in at least eighty per cent. of second-rate English novels and third-rate English plays. . . . But for all this, "The Strangers' Wedding" is yet a book of genuine consideration. It is well designed; its people are not sticks; one can read it without any feeling of intellectual condescension. In it George marks time. I believe that he will take another step forward anon. . . .

Among the lesser novels are half a dozen or more that may be read without



pain. Arnold Bennett's "THE GATES OF WRATH" (*Doran*), is a reprint of an extravaganza done in his first period. It is cleverly constructed, bouncingly written and immensely readable. (I read it on a train, and a hundred miles seemed as the leap of a frog, the gesture of a bartender.) Bennett's competence to tell a story, once he has a story to tell, is undeniable. He is dull only when he abandons the dynamic for the static. Another fair flower of fancy is Ellen Glasgow's "LIFE AND GABRIELLA" (*Doubleday-Page*), the story of a Southern girl's revolt against the superstition, incapacity and general dunderheadedness of the South, and of her struggle for existence in New York. Warring upon Southern sentimentalism, Miss Glasgow here reveals it: the ultimate solution of Gabriella Carr's problem is love; the curtain comes down upon an amorous surrender, with the future serene. But the downright maudlin is very skillfully avoided, and if the book had no other virtue it would at least deserve praise for its pitiless picture of Gabriella's mother, a genuine Southern mush-worshipper. Miss Glasgow is much above the average woman novelist in America; she has sound and honest work to her credit; she belongs to that slender rank which includes Mrs. Watts and Miss Cather. . . . C. Allan Gilbert's frontispiece portrait of Gabriella, by the way, presents an extremely appetizing damsel, albeit she hasn't brown hair, like the authentic Gabriella (*vide* page 31), but black. One forgives the whole tribe of novel illustrators for one such sweetie. In my nonage I harbored the passion of a love for a girl who, if she had been more skillful at make-up, would have closely resembled this Gilbertian pseudo-Gabriella. . . .

In "HOMO SAPIENS," by Stanislaw Przybyszewski (*Knopf*), lately suppressed by the police in New York, I can find nothing of serious consequence, either morally or artistically. It is the story of a Polish Lothario, and it treats his commonplace amours and

puerile philosophizings with heavy solemnity. A Frenchman would have made a comic novel of it, and not only improved its charm, but also evaded the constabulary wrath, for the Anglo-Saxon moralist is always disarmed by facetiousness. The same English play-censor who forbade the performance of Brieux's dramatized gospel hymns was himself the author of "Dear Old Charlie". . . . Two translations of far more bulk and beam are those of "JERUSALEM," by Selma Lagerlöf (*Doubleday-Page*), and of "TARAS BULBA," by Nicolai V. Gogol (*Knopf*), the former a study of Swedish peasants, particularly on the side of their religious manias, and the latter a classical picture of the Russian Cossacks. Both are books of very high rank, and worthy of far more careful discussion than I could venture to give them here. The translators are Velma Swanston Howard and Isabel F. Hapgood respectively, two women whose services to the freedom of the sea in letters have been numerous and distinguished.

Various light and empty things: "THE ETERNAL MAGDALENE," by Robert H. McLaughlin (*Doran*), in which, despite a serious attempt to deal with a great human problem, the fable is spoiled by the conversion of a vice-crusader to toleration and understanding, a psychological impossibility; "A PAIR OF SILK STOCKINGS," by Cyril Harcourt (*Dodd-Mead*), a novelization of a popular farce; "HELD TO ANSWER," by Peter Clark Macfarlane (*Little-Brown*), a saccharine melodrama with a hero who takes to preaching; "A MAN'S REACH," by Sally Nelson Robins (*Lippincott*), in which Randolph Tuberville, a talented but thirsty young Virginia gentleman is saved from the Rum Demon by Miss Lettice Corbin, who tackles him with love, poetry, mental suggestion and the Jubilee Songs; "THE IRON STAIR," by "Rita" (*Putnam*), in which the hero is the Hon. Aubrey FitzJohn Derringham, son to Lord Dulcimer, and there is an air of high life; and "PERSUASIVE PEGGY," by Maravane Thompson

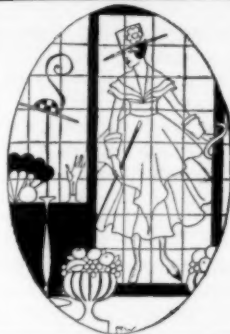
(*Stokes*), a bubbly confection of the "Bambi" school. I find such volumes very heavy going. And almost as heavy are "MILDEW MANSE," by Belle K. Maniates (*Little-Brown*), "FELICITY CROFTON," by Marguerite Bryant (*Duffield*), and "THE IMMORTAL GYMNASTS," by Marie Cher (*Doran*). Let me make up for them by commending to you five novels that, whatever their defects, are at least capably written and inoffensive to the higher cerebral centers, to wit, "DAVIS PENSTEPHEN," by Richard Pryce (*Houghton*); "THE REAL ADVENTURE," by Henry Kitchell Webster (*Bobbs-Merrill*); "DUKE JONES," by Ethel Sidgwick (*Small-Maynard*); "ROSE COTTINGHAM," by Netta Syrett (*Putnam*), and "THE OAKLEVITES," by E. F. Benson (*Doran*). Four of these are English and one is American. Not one of them is first-rate, even as novels go today, but in all of them you will find civilized entertainment.

### § 5

*A Conrad Book.*—Between novels Joseph Conrad publishes a collection of short stories, by name "WITHIN THE TIDES" (*Doubleday-Page*). One of them, "The Planter of Malata," is a novelette as long as "The Point of Honor." It is a tale of the Eastern islands, and full of Conrad's brooding and melancholy irony. Its machinery is characteristic; it proceeds by indirection; the true Conradian vagueness of outline is there. Of the other three stories, one is a melodrama of the English coast, the second is a tale of the Peninsular War, and the third goes back to the East. Ranged beside such masterpieces as "Youth," "Falk," "Typhoon" and "Heart of Darkness," these pieces reveal a common weakness; what they lack is the allurements of fantastic and powerful character. No figure in them, indeed, is even remotely comparable to Falk, to Captain MacWhirr, to Kurtz or to Captain Whalley. Nor, for that matter, do they show the dramatic force and poignancy

of the stories just named. But though they thus fall a good deal below Conrad's best, they are still tales of unmistakable merit, and any lesser romancer might well point to them with great satisfaction. . . Which suggests the happy thought that Spring is here again, and that the time has thus come to reread "Youth." I shall not miss it, believe me! I would as lief miss rereading "Huckleberry Finn," the central business and delight of my Springs since the year 1888. Has anyone ever noticed that the two stories are as alike as two peas, that the fundamental idea of the one is the fundamental idea of the other, that their very management is identical? . . . Two immortal and profoundly moving evocations of the True Romance, and in neither is there a hint of sex, a word of love! . . .

Two other volumes of unusual short stories are "WITH A DIPLOMA," by V. I. Nemirovitch-Dantchenko (*Luce*) and "THE BET AND OTHER TALES," by Anton Tchekhov (*Luce*). Tchekhov's work is already well known in this country and here he is represented by some of his best. It would be difficult, indeed, to exceed the sardonic humor of "A Tedious Story" (the longest of the thirteen), or, for that matter, of "The Bet." The ghastly humor of the Russian, with its undertones of the macabre, is in both stories. The writings of Dantchenko are less familiar; the present volume I believe, is the first translation to be published in America. It contains two longish tales. The first, "A Diploma," deals with village life in Little Russia; the second, "The Whirlwind," is a story of St. Petersburg society in the days before the Russo-Japanese war. In each there is enough of novelty and enough of literary distinction to suggest the hope that more of this author's work will be done into English. He belongs to the generation between that of Tolstoi and that of Gorki and Andrieff. His life has been that of a man of the world, and so his pictures of his countrymen should be penetrating and entertaining.



## In the Shops of the Smart Set

By Renée



If you are interested in advance information, not only about fashions, but about the novel and useful things to be found in New York's best shops, you will read the following pages with pleasure and profit. We shall be glad to tell you where any of the articles mentioned in these pages can be found, or to purchase them for you. Address your inquiry to "In the Shops of the Smart Set," 331 Fourth Ave., New York City.

**A**FTER we pass from the hands of our mothers and nurses to those of our dressmakers and milliners, the old maxim we used to learn about trifles making perfection holds good in a different sense. The rebuke that used to be administered for the fault that made a good child naughty is replaced by one for a discordant detail which destroys the harmony of a costume. It need not be a very important detail—in fact, the size of it often varies in inverse ratio to its disastrous effect. But as one little minor accessory badly chosen has the power to transform the most attractive costume into an exhibition of bad taste, now that the Spring suits and gowns are already bought, the most important demands on our consideration are made by those little trifles that are to enhance or mar the effect of the new clothes. First of all come the more serviceable accessories for practical clothes.

### THINGS FOR MORNING WEAR

The suit shown in the illustration on this page is intended for a morning stroll, the things that go with it serving

to emphasize the effect of its practicality and smartness. The suit itself is of rather large black and white wool check and costs \$45.00.

On page 160 is a blouse to wear with this suit. It is of heavy crepe de chine, simply cut, and the distinctive features of it are a panel of box plaits front and back, and oddly shaped collar and cuffs in white corded silk. The buttons which trim the front are black and white, a touch that relates the blouse to the suit materials. Price \$5.

Such a hat as the little sailor shown in the illustration with the suit can be worn successfully only where an entire absence of color in the remainder of the costume allows for its bright shade of cerise. The crown is of white grosgrain ribbon, embroidered in cerise silk in Saracenic



design. The brim is of cerise-colored grosgrain ribbon, folded at the side to hold a neat tailored bow. The price is \$8.50.

The shoes in the same illustration are also shown separately on page 160. They are moderately heavy black laced ones and cost \$8.00. The gloves are white kid, with black and white stitching and a cuff of black kid. Price \$2.50 a pair.

Black Morocco leather forms the bag which is carried with this suit. The shape and the materials that compose it make it suitable for practical service. The lining is of dark silk, and inside there is a compartment for bills, a change-purse, a mirror and a place for cards. The price of it was \$3.95.

#### AN AFTER-NOON BAG

Of a very different character is the Lily bag, shown on this page. Far from being serviceable, it can hold hardly more than a tiny change-purse and a handkerchief. It would, however, be very attractive worn with one of the new afternoon suits of taffetas or silk, and such a costume all the items in this illustration are intended to accompany. The bag is of two-toned silk, darker on the outside. The corners are turned back and held with buttons, and the edges and the narrow strap by which it is carried are finished with gold braid. The price is \$2.95.

Old rose Georgette crepe forms the afternoon blouse shown in this illustration. The collar, in cape effect, is formed of three layers of white Georgette crepe, and the cuffs, of white

Georgette crepe, are shaped to match. The fronts of the blouse are turned back at the bottom to show a chemisette of white Georgette crepe. White pearl buttons trim the front closing. The price of \$5.95 is quite moderate for a blouse of such materials and attractive style.

#### NEW VEILS

One of the latest arrivals from France in the way of veils is the new tea-veil, which is being shown in a large shop on Fifth Avenue. The front is

cut out to leave the mouth uncovered and to obviate the necessity of having to raise the veil and disarrange the hair during afternoon tea. Besides being very practical for such use, the shape of these is very becoming to most faces. The veil in the illustration cost



\$1.75. It was of black silk octagon net, trimmed with hand embroidery, chenille and velvet. Others ranged in price from \$1.25 to \$1.75.

#### MILLINERY FOR LATE SPRING

The hat on which this veil is worn in the illustration bears the stamp of the new Spring millinery in a brim turned down all the way around. At least it goes farther than that, and has no brim at all; what seems to be brim being merely an extension of the tall crown. It is of black Milan straw, with a trimming of black satin bands and a wreath of flowers in old rose and Nattier blue around the top. The price is \$16.50.

The hatpin is not very unusual, but

worthy of comment in that it is of dainty design and costs only \$1.00. It is shaped like a thistle, and the top is formed of an amethyst and four tiny rhinestones.

#### SHOES AND STOCKINGS FOR THE AFTERNOON

New in the way of afternoon footwear are boots in leather of a color to match the costume, but though these are very attractive in some shades, they are rather impractical and will probably prove only a short-lived fad. The shoes shown at the left-hand side of the illustration on page 160 are extremely light and dainty. The toe is of soft black kid, and the rest of the shoe, excepting the heel, is in black satin. The price is \$7.50.

Clocks at the sides are still among the most popular trimmings for stockings. A handsome pair in a Fifth Avenue hosiery shop had clocks of openwork an inch wide and cost \$5.00 a pair. Some less expensive fancy stockings are those illustrated below. They are of black ribbed silk, and were marked at ninety-



five cents in the hosiery department of a large store. On the same counter, for the same price, was a pair of black stockings ornamented with white stripes running around the ankle. These also are illustrated, as well as a pair of stockings trimmed with stripes running lengthwise to above the ankle and finished with arrowheads, which cost the same amount.

#### EVENING FOOTWEAR

Beads form a favorite trimming for a great many of the new evening stockings. Shown in the illustration is a pair of white silk stockings, with an Indian head worked on the instep in beads of several different colors. These cost \$8.50 a pair, and others illustrated, of black silk, trimmed with three bands of bright blue sequins, cost \$6.25.

The number of beads on evening stockings seems to increase as the number on evening slippers correspondingly diminishes. Designs of small beads all over the front of an evening slipper are not so frequent in the new models as smaller designs formed of larger beads. The pair in the illustration on page 160 are of bronze kid, with a trimming of rubia beads and tiny bronze beads. The price was \$9.00 a pair. For \$10.00 there was a novel pair cut in wide lattice effect in the front to show the stockings.

#### TO GO WITH EVENING GOWNS

Shown above are some things that could be worn with an evening gown of almost any style



and color. The scarf is a compromise between heavy ones of spangled net and extremely light ones of tulle. It is hardly more than an additional ornamentation for the gown, as, besides being of silk net too fine to form a protection for the shoulders, it is very much narrower than evening scarfs are generally expected to be. The trimming consists of a border of silver sequins and white beads around the edge, and the price is \$9.50.

To match this is a fan of white bone and silk trimmed with silver sequins, which costs \$2.50.

The popularity of Bakst designs have had some effect in causing the return of colored stones in haircombs for evening wear, and the vogue of Spanish things is influencing their shape. A pretty tortoise-shell comb has a large Spanish top trimmed with a design in very small colored stones in red, blue, green and white. This cost \$5.75, and is shown in the illustration. Another comb, with a solid square top of tortoise shell, ornamented with colored stones, cost \$6.50.

The evening bag which is illustrated is covered in red, green, gold and white beads in a rose design. The handles are formed of white silk, and the lining and the frill around the top are of white satin. The price is \$14.50.

#### SOME NOVEL LINGERIE

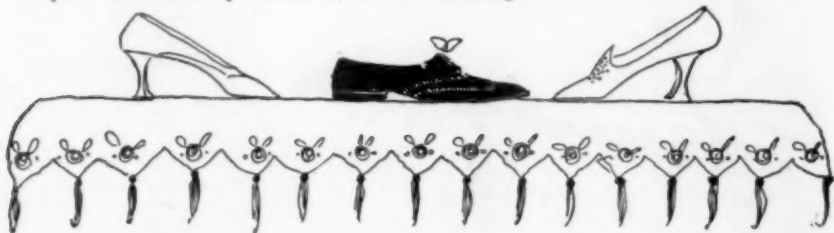
New in the way of lingerie is an envelope chemise of crepe de chine, which



is made to serve the same purpose as the opera bodice mentioned last month. It consists of a square of crepe de chine, shaped slightly to conform to the figure lines, and finished at the bottom with lace and at the top with lace and an elastic shirring. There were no shoulder-straps, the chemise being intended for wear with a sleeveless evening gown. The price was \$2.00.

Something on very much the same order, intended to serve the same purpose, is an envelope chemise which has a hemstitched frill and an elastic shirring at the top, a shirring of elastic at the waist and a hem finished with hemstitching at the bottom. There are two ribbon straps over the shoulders, which can be slipped down if the garment is to be worn with a sleeveless or transparent evening gown, and these and the shirring at the waist hold the chemise in place. The price is \$3.95.

No matter where you live, you can always avail yourself of the best that the New York shops have to offer, through the Shopping Service of THE SMART SET. If you live in the city you can save time by making use of this department, which is designed for the convenience of all of our readers. We will purchase anything for sale in New York City upon receipt of its retail price, or, if the cost is unknown to you, we will price the same and hold it for you until the requisite amount is received. Every article described in this department is free of charge.





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RATHER a hard question to answer, that. Hard because folks love so many different kinds of people and things. But most people (no matter how mean and selfish and nasty they are) love some one. Some men love a blond and blushing debutante with long curly locks. Some women love a brunette artist, writer, or musician, with a pale, porcelain brow and a black, tawny mane. Some folks—nearly all of us in fact—love a smiling old lady, with white hair, a wrinkled forehead and a pair of funny gold spectacles. Some love a wild boy at college; some love a dark little girl at boarding school—while some misguided people spend all the wealth and bounty of their love on a mere motor-car, a stuffy club, a picture gallery, an inbred dog, a gloomy library, or a silly bag of golf clubs.



"A little dark girl at school"

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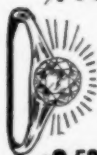


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